

The Customer Experience: One Stop Center

The following comments were submitted by survey respondents to the following optional question, “**What, if anything, would you like to share about your experience?**”

In total, 236 submitted comments. A handful of comments were omitted as they were not relevant to the question. After review of the submitted comments, it was determined that each falls within one or more of the following categories:

1. Positive Comments Regarding the Process, Facility, and Staff
2. Negative Comments Regarding the Staff
3. Negative Comments Regarding Conflicts between Plan Review and Field Inspection
4. Negative Comments Regarding the Review Process, Organization, and Facility
5. Negative Comments Regarding the Decision Making Process, “Common Sense,” Expertise, and Management of the Department
6. Miscellaneous Comments and Recommendations for Policy Changes

These comments have been grouped into these categories to facilitate review. The comments below, however, have not been modified from the original entry by the respondent. It should be noted that, for privacy purposes, some comments were hidden (e.g., names and phone numbers).

Positive Comments Regarding the Process, Facility, and Staff

All department were surprisingly quite helpful & professional. Thanks

All Inspection Offices were very helpful and eager to help Thanks

All personnel acted in a professional manner, they answered all of my questions and provided all the required information.

All services run better since the new building was built. Keep up the good work.

allways satisfactory

Although my needs were re-directed to the City of Alamo Heights, the staff was very accomodating in handling the re-direct. We are planning additional work in the near future that are within the City of San Antonio's jurisdiction and we look forward to your assistance in providing new and updated facilities for your citizens and our customers.

Andrew Perez (Electrical Sign Inspector) was extremely helpful in expiditing the process. I would like to have a way to collect and submit the information for permits through the internet website.

Better than the Houston process, for sure:) We have developed two apartmtment projects in San Antonio in the past two years. Overall, the process was professionally handled by staff. Comments to plan checks were thorough and understandable. Our negative experiences were generally limited to a few "green" inspectors. Otherwise, the majority of people with whom we have interfaced were professional.

city of san antonio seems to treat commercial and residential citizens truly as customers - not something we have seen much of before from other governmental agencies. Well done!

Creation of the one stop services center has given this school district the opportunity to visit one facility and take care of all issues, without having to "jump around" the city trying to resolve issues.

Customer Service and the Chief Electrical Services were very helpful and responded to my questions and concerns with outstanding professionalism.

Development Services Manager George E. Perez was instrumental in the favorable experience that I enjoyed. I cannot overstate his importance to the success of the overall process.

ERNEST RODRIGUEZ IS THE NICEST AND MOST HELPFUL PERSON AT THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE CENTER !!!!! HE IS GREAT AND CERTAINLY IS AN ASSET TO THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO THANK YOU DAVID CATES

Even your secretaries on the phone were very helpful in directing me to the appropriate office.

Every one that I delt with where very professional.

Everybody was fantastic. I did have a little trouble getting a response from your Aviation department. Other than that it has been a good experience.

Everything was fine

everything was satisfactory

Fernando De Leon has been very helpful in the whole process, along with all the staff at the one-stop. We deal with different cities and we grade San Antonio the most professional. It has been a pleasure to do business in your City. Thank you, **[name removed]**

For this particular sitsuation, I was pleased with the manner in which the individuals responded and directed our concern to a person knowledgable of such existing circumstances.

Generally speaking, after the "kinks" were worked our at the one-stop (at the beginning), everything seems to be working pretty well all things considered. There are minor problems every-now-and-then, but it has worked so much better than the Municipal Plaza Building.

Generally, the development services staff related to Fire Protection plan review is extremely knowledgeable.

Great job by everyone

Great service

Having encountered problems with the licensed plumber hired to work on my house, the COSA staff was very helpful, they advised that we appeal at the state level because the plumber was just being irresponsible. Too bad that the same could not be said of the TX State Plumbing Board and their inspectors. After 5 months of frustration at the state level and a year of still not being able to live in my own house, we have been forced to go to the expense of hiring a lawyer and suing said plumber. Who is still out there with his state license continuing on his merry way. Meanwhile, I wonder how he gets away with this, because when his insurance was approached with our intentions to sue they said that they would rather settle for whatever amount rather than dispute in court. How can this be? Shouldn't this person be held accountable for his actions? Who can we appeal to? Please advise.

Having the sattelite office on Blanco is a boon. I would also like to work with the city to marry contractors and inspectors, so the city gets the best work done possible. I am calling it "Renovate America."

Helpfull Staff

I am down there usually on a weekly basis and they have truly come a long way from when they first moved. I know a lot of them now on a first name basis and all of them always recognize me even if I am not working with them specifically.

I applaud the internet system and sub-stations for retrieving permits. I despise the long waits when I need to pull a permit from the main office.

I did not physically go to any of the sites, I phoned to get a tree/environmental inspection to start work on a project. The staff was very friendly and helpful.

I feel that the Development Services has done a very good job in prviding services and assistance in a very professional manner.

I found that the pulling of permits to be a huge success and would like to see more things like that available through the internet

I go to the Valley View service center because the staff is very friendly and helpful and I can get in and out quickly. I hope improvements can be made to the online sytem because it does not work all the time.

i had a very good experience with the staff at the one stop center, mr. mike rodriguez,mr. leo salas,mr. jesus villela, and mr. jim clark. they are a good team and are very helpful. i hope they are not broken up and they get some additional help and support.

I have a great relationship with the city employees, they have always treated me with respect and handled my permits in a professional manner. I have run into problems here and there but nothing they or myself could not fix.

I have come to know the representatives and they are all very professional and helpful.

I have found that dealing with all departments at the "One Stop" has been an overall positive experience.

I have had several visits and meetings with staff members. Everyone has been very helpful and it has been a very positive experience. I obtain permits and development services throughout the country and the City of San Antonio has been one of my best experiences. Thanks for providing a good experience

I have had wonderful service from all the personnel in Development Services. I especially appreciate Michael Rodriguez & Jim Clark. They are very professional, knowledgeable and helpful. I always look forward to visiting the Development Services Department.

I love the new facility; the staff was friendly and accomodating; the inspectors did a great job of communicating with me

I noticed that there have been tremendous improvements in attitude over that last two years. Please continue the improvement process and march forward towards becoming the most professional and efficient department in the city.

I phoned for an appt. with the building plan reviewer and he helped me find a solution that would meet code.

I see the services generally improving as compared to when it first opened.

I sought a permit to build a deck on a residence that was under construction. The staff suggested that we treat the application as a change to the permit previously issued to the builder. This saved me both time and money.

I think having a "one stop" center is very convenient to those doing business with the city. Good job!

I think perhaps the system could use some tweeking. However the staff were GREAT!.

I think the city of san antonio is extremely fortunate to have staff like Whitney Crahen, Terry Kanawin and in general I think you have a truly service oriented staff. It is a big assistance to the business community. I would also like to say that I have gone from sceptical to impressed with our new mayor. I think we are fortunate he is our mayor.

I think the Development Service Staff has done a great job considering they have to constantly deal with City Council making changes to the rules and the limited staff development services has to work with. The amount of fees paid to this department should more than pay for additional staff to assist in the development process.

I was pleasantly surprised at how easy it was to go through the process

I was quick and timely

I went in for a preliminary review on an office project that we are working on and had a good meeting and experience.

I wish other cities would follow your example and provide this "Prereview of proposed project" service.

In dealing with the plan review staff on a weekly basis, I have always received good customer service.

In general, development services has been helpful. Fernando De Leon, Sandy Jenkins and Alex Garcia have been especially helpful recently. We have had some issues with some of the plan reviewers that have continued through out the years.

It is so much better than it was before the changes to the one stop that it would take pages to explain. They are doing a great job! THANKS

it is very difficult to cover all your bases when submitting a package to DS Staff. and they know this, they are always very helpful and even work with you before you prepare your submittal.

It took several tries before I found the right person, but they were all very helpful.

It was 3+ years ago that I was there, but I do recall the convenience and ease (no waiting) when I had to get a permit.

It was my first experience with the One Stop service and I was pleased with the service.

It was not as threatening as I thought it would be; they were helpful.

It went well

I've noticed a better attitude and in general more of the people working at this building are going out of there way to assist.

Jaclyn Gonzales stayed well past closing to help us get our application, forms and drawings submitted for approval. One of her co-workers was adamant that we should leave and come back the next day but Jaclyn willingly stayed to help us instead of going home. She was very polite and professional.

Keep up the good work.

Maria Rodriguez is an exemplary employee. It's obvious she takes pride in her job and is willingness to help educate customers. She made my visit to the City office less nerve-racking. I definitely walked out more informed. I hear people constantly complaining about the city "bureaucracy" – it's obvious the individuals have not had communication with Maria or her staff. Please take the time to praise employees like Maria who make the visits to the City less stressful.

Mr. Alex Garcia, Development Services Mgr. was very knowledgeable and helpful.

My company is based in Atlanta, Ga. I have done work in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida and Oregon. In the past 20 years I have not seen a more professional, polite, helpful and well organized construction department. Working in San Antonio was a very pleasant experience.

My discussion was of an exploratory nature. What do I need to do? type of thing. They gave me all the time and attention that I needed. I have elected to hold off on the development until I have more of my ducks in a row.

My experience was courteous, helpful, and timely! Staff was professional in response to inquiries.

my experience was handled very professionally

my experience was with a well thought out streamlined office

My main contact was a lady by the name of Olivia Rodriguez who helped me through the entire process. If not for her assistance and knowledgeable background I feel that I would have taken much longer to obtain any help from the city and it's process of paper work and delays.

Over all the city staff that work in the office are usually courteous.

Overall, the visit educated me in the subject of maintaining our privileges as a contractor in the city of San Antonio. Thank You.

Paul Cooper and the landscape folks are always very helpful, occasionally dependent on the areas of the city the plumbing irrigation inspections folks can be unresponsive and not helpful.

San Antonio has a very efficient operation in this regard. Many state agencies could use this operation as a model. Especially the drivers license and licensing offices.

San Antonio is one of my favorite cities. Mr. Alex Garcia is especially helpful in pointing people in the right direction for information.

Staff was very helpful and courteous. Clerk explained the experience/paperwork thoroughly since it was something new to me.

Staff was very professional to the different needs I had.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING SO FRIENDLY.

Thanks again for the good job

That the Development Service personnel were responsive to Oakland Estate Neighborhood concerns and were willing to provide information and followup.

The addition of Barry Archer will improve the existing staff. He has a lot of good ideas to bring continuity to the department. For instance field inspectors not bad mouthing plan review staff in public but instead work together to resolve something that might have been missed in plan review. With his military background he brings discipline.

The building department to include inspector was very helpful. Everyone made it a pleasure to work in San Antonio. Look forward to working there again.

The City employees' were very professional and helpful.

The Customer Service Rep. for COSA was very helpful, courteous and even stayed through lunch to help me get the building permits. The project was spread over four school campuses, and as such was much more difficult than would be expected for a single building permit. A total of seven permits were issued on this project

The Development Services Land Planning staff --- Eddie Guzman, Elizabeth Carol, Luz Gonzales, and Donna Schueling are a very knowledgeable, strong, supportive team. They know what they are doing and I commend them for their work.

The Fire Chief and Mr. Cantu are very professional. Great Team

The gentleman I spoke with was very helpful and courteous.

The Hotel was a very complex renovation that required working closely with the Inspection Dept. so that floors could be turned back over to the operations personnel of the hotel. Everything worked like clockwork and a lot of the credit goes to the City of San Antonio Inspection Department.

The implementation of the School District Team has been of great service on issues relative to school projects.

The information I have sent is not accurate, I retired from North East ISD five years ago. After retirement I worked as an Inspector with the City of San Antonio for four years. I have currently been employed with the City of Floresville for ten months. I still use the services of the Development Services Department and think of the Personnel there as friends. Each time I call with questions that relate back to the job I am currently doing the response from this Department has been very professional, and most times they do not realize who I am. Respectfully, **[name removed]**

The lady I dealt with was very helpful and friendly .

The move of my business of 20 years at one location to another was pretty much a smooth transition. The people downtown were very helpful in providing information I needed to obtain my C of O.

The new facility is wonderful. I love having the city, SAWS, CPS etc. all at the same place. it has been very practical.

The new One Stop department was a great idea. I have worked in 44 States and found this to be an adequate and timely facility. Alex Garcia was very helpful by making sure the proper people were available to assist me. Many thanks to Alex for his help.

The person assigned gave his email address so that rather than call (which takes forever and you are transferred from one person to the next), I would be able to contact him. I have several times and he has responded in a reasonable time.

The person in the front kiosk/counter was enthusiastic and provided me assistance. Our experience with the review committee was positive. Our paint colors for the exterior of the home were approved!

The process for a ten day turnaround is timely and complete. I submit 6-8 telecommunication permits a year. I've always had great service and usually close to the expected time frame. It might speed up the process if the check-in person could waive the

n/a items which often automatically appear as required. For example: Why should the permit require a tree ordinance review when the antennas are on top of an existing roof or on an existing tower. This is always taken care of but it does take time because some of these are required reviews. Better trained plan check-in people with the authority to override manitory steps when they are not applicable might streamline the process.

The process is very time consuming and things need to be more streamlined. The process is not user friendly especially for a lay-person.

The professionals in the development office were extremely helpful and provided information very efficiently.

The service has improved from a few years back, possibly due to the new building and more ample space.

The service I received on my visit this week was impressive. It was apparent that the individual working on my application enjoyed his job and processed my paper work in a professional and timely manner. This visit was the best one yet and this individual should be commended for his positive attitude.

The service in the departments I deal with has contiued to improve over the last year and a half.

The staff always was helpful.

The staff at Las Palmas Center are very helpful and friendly

The staff was genuinely busy with ongoing issues and incoming calls, yet maintained focus on serving the current customer and related tasks.

the staff was very helpful with the information that i needed. you have an excelent staff working there.

The staff was very polite and very professional

The tremendous knowledge and guidance of Alex Garcia makes our projects as understanding as possible.

The valley View service center is always a pleasing experience. They are all very helpful at that location.

The whole facility, was very user friendly. Parking lot could use some work.

The whole process of applying and receiving permits have come along way in the past year or two. Thanks for making our time (contractors) much shorter so we can get to work. Also the online application is a great program.

The zoning division of Development Services has been consistently knowledgeable and professional.

They were very organized, professional, friendly, helpful and informative. They made the process as painless as can be. I had to get building permits, inspections, and Order of Occupancy.

This has been one of the first of many experiences in opening of my first business. I am learning first hand the steps it takes in opening one up. All inspectors were prompt and professional, and advised me of what I needed.

This site is for 1 of the on site suppliers at the Toyota project. We have been in the permit process since May and still do not have a permit. In 8 weeks we will need to seek a C of O. At this rate we will not be able to do so because we won't have a permit. On Monday I received an email that if I brought 3 drawings down, our Contingencies would be cleared for a final permit. Needless to say I rushed down with the 3 drawings requested. The response was; They would update the computer and stamp them sometime this week. I don't understand why it would take a week for them to stamp the 3 drawings that are already approved and release the conditions in the computer.

This was my first visit to the office and was pleasantly surprised of the friendly manner I was received and all my questions answered. I have no suggestion to make at this time.

This was the most complete information I was able to receive. The fact that this happened in one place in about 10 minutes was great!

Very happy with the way S.A. works with their contractors- it was a pleasure doing business there, and I will do more work there if the opportunity happens again- Sincerely, **[name removed]**

Very informative

Very organized. Much different than I was used to in McAllen

We have worked with the City on several projects. The experience has usually entailed some frustration, but the process has been easier over the last 6 months (or so). I don't know if this is because I am now a familiar face, or if the process is really improving. In any event, the process has been better lately.

We were concerned of the proposed land use for the south side and did find out they had a proposal for land use that was in error and they have corrected it. We are very happy with everyone's response to our concerns.

We were the civil engineer on the project and wish to thank Victor Martinez, Hector Berrones, Robert Opitz, Richard De la Cruz and Fernando De Leon for their assistance and professionalism.

Web site access to plan reviewers comments is excellent and very useful.

Your city has the best web site and web site monitoring system I've ever dealt with. Great job.

Your information staff person (female) greeted me and provided me with information was excellent.

During my meeting with Whitney Crahen, a Fire Protection Specialist and Plans Examiner, I found the experience to be an extremely pleasant one. Ms. Crahen is extremely knowledgeable of the requirements set forth by the City of San Antonio involving Fire Alarm Systems, as well as the adopted codes and standards. She was able to answer all of my questions without hesitation, with the utmost confidence and professionalism, and was able to easily refer me to the specific sections of the National Fire Alarm Code that were the source of my concern. I was able to return to my employer with the answers that were needed to address any future situations. I look forward to working with Ms. Crahen on a regular basis.

I took over my grandfathers company in 1983,so I have grown with the city's changes and big improvements. I can still remember half of my day would be spent turning in plans, and waiting two weeks before they were ready, and another half day to pick-up my plans, not to mention there was no public parking. I would try to time my bank deposits with my plans turn-in or pick-up. Now its GREAT, like running a 5-k race.

Retail Constructors, Inc. performs work in most of the major cities thruought the state of Texas. San Antonio is the only city that I will personally go and submit, walk-thru, or pick up a permit for my projects because of the ease and professional attitude I find when I walk in the door. **[name removed]**

very good experience

Everyone was helpful and gave good answers. Call back time is some what long. Over all things were great. Thank you.

Negative Comments Regarding the Staff

1. When seeking clarification to a question I was transferred 3 times and given 3 different answers. 2. I was actually shouted at and belittled (in my opinion) by the agent. When I asked for clarification to a question, instead of attempting to clarify, the agent shouted, "DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME THE FIRST TIME?" I thought this was extremely unprofessional, and he never clarified the answer. 3. Information posted on the Dynamic Portal is often not updated. Even after 3 months there is still incorrect information posted. Dates were changed. Example: My plan review took several months. When it was finally approved, the date of approval was off by two months. Also a Fee in Lieu was posted as one amount, but when I went to pay, I was informed it was an entirely different amount. Even now there is incorrect information posted.

3 of the 4 people who I met did an excellent job. The 4th was untrained, late, slow and in general I felt I was inconveniencing him by requesting a permit. He also had the overtone that he was in charge and could deny my permit.

I WAS TREATED RUDE BY ALL AND IF YOU CALL IT A ONE STOP IT SHOULD BE A ONE STOP NOT A TWO OR FIVE STOP THE SIGN DEPT IS BEING POORLY RUN BY A MAN WHO HAS NOT BEEN THE SIGN BIZZ AND HOLD NO RESPECT FOR THE ONE THAT ARE

A couple of issues: First there is a request for overtime plan review to help expedite the construction however it appears to have no bearing on the review since it is left to the discretion of the staff and I was told my type of permit was not being done on overtime review (a couple of weeks after submitting). The Fire Marshal was very helpful at the onset by providing my company with permission to start work without a permit but later became unreachable. Myself and others left several messages and sent emails to him that went unanswered (in fact still haven't been answered though we have worked through it and it is now a moot point). Having worked in San Antonio since 1999, I would strongly recommend that the City Council/Mayor mandate a maximum review time for any plans to 21 days similar to Austin and that the permit application also serve as a "go to work" substitute permit until an actual permit is received thus allowing contractors and owners to get work started while formal reviews are taking place. This applies more to trade specific permits than general building permits.

A little more person to person communication.

albeit pleasant - staff generally apathetic

Allan Rush needs to be terminated. He acts like he is God.

Although I was treated curtly, the response time to questions sent over the internet or telephone was delayed or drawn out

Although the staff was generally pleasant to deal with they are not always correct in the information they provide.

Basically, I had to remind the individuals that I was the "customer" and I was there to resolve issues in the correct manner...not be talked down to as if I were a child or complete idiot.

Besides slow review times, the most frustrating experiences I have had with Development Services is at the commercial intake counter. Neither Rudy Cantu or Alicia Castillo provide consistent service or understand what requirements apply to the different types of projects. Both have demonstrated a lack of professionalism with customers (myself and have witnessed others). Please provide competent personnel for the commercial intake counter. On a more positive note, Ann Garcia, Fernando DeLeon, and Paul Cooper have become - in my mind - the "go to" people within Development Services. When an issues arises these staff members will go out of their way to help. Also the young lady at the front information desk - Mary (??) is extremely courteous and helpful.

City personnel seldom offered information unless asked a specific question.

Compared to other cities we work, San Antonio attitude seems to want to work against the contractor than "How can we help" attitude. Most City Employees act as if they are doing us a favor.

Courtesy Inspection process for streets and drainage in my opinion is cumbersome and staff response varies from prompt in some instances to totally unconcerned in others.

Customer service is lacking, I think that the employee's think that we have all done this before and some of havn't. I felt belittled...

Dealing with people who think their job is to find flaws in your project, rather than to help you get your project approved and start construction.

Dear Mr Mayor, To encourage permit cooperation, the City DS should treat the public as true customers. To get information about code interpretation and permit/inspection process is nearly impossible and often incorrect. The developement staff presents itself arrogantly which is the opposite of a true "customer friendly" environment. This type of behavior encourages the public to try "skirt" the system as an effort to "avoid" developemnt services requirements. Many phone calls for help are met with a "run around" of various dept./staff , all with different answers to the same questions. A central "help line" needs to be established with knowledgeable people (inspectors-codes specialists-etc) - not a receptionist. Any new or remodled structure provides addition tax revenue to SA- so why doesn't DS happlily "facilitate" the process for those revenues. thanks for asking-

Depending on the clerk you get, determines whether your experience will flow or not. I've had short visits with the "One Stop" and I've had hours there at the "One Stop".

Despite my best attempts to respond quickly to the inspectors responses/questions, the delay in the permitting process was due in large part to the inspectors lack of professional courtesy in returning my calls. My feeling about the experiences that I've had with the new One Stop is that the general practice is to quickly find a problem and then send you away to find a solution.

Employee took a personal phone call and stopped what she was doing for me to finish her call.

First - this survey asks only one question four times and offers no real opportunity to give any meaningful feed back. Second, it is the inspectors (mostly fire) who appear to needlessly upset applicants for Certificates of Occupancy. Some (not all) have been known to approach those using your service in a threatening and authoritative manner when users wish to comply and simply need guidance. Most people seeking C Of O's are one time visitors and have no idea what the requirements are or the process and some inspectors approach the task believing applicants are somehow trying to cheat them personally. Inspectors from other disciplines provide simple direct feedback and compliance instruction, helping applicants understanding, with out threats of reprisal. It has been my experience that, those who have power, need not express it, except through the results of their direction. Those who needlessly express power are seldom capable of fulfilling the service portion of the entitlement of the public service concept. Regardless, people empowered with this public trust are the people who must make things happen. I believe the applicant actually wants things to be correct and is shocked by the sour attempt to create fear of the entire process. If anyone is trying to cheat the system, their motivation is most likely driven by their fear (lack of understanding) and the actual difficulty of the system.

for the permit clerks to have a little more patience with the paying customer, we are always going to have silly questions and we will always need the answer repeated twice.

Guard at front desk did not give clear directions regarding walk-in process. Then when I complained about the wait he made offensive remark.

Hey Phil, We've met before. I'm a friend of Larry Clark's. The biggest pain in this process was getting inspectors to show up ON THEIR APPOINTED DAY. This rarely happened, and caused me significant extra time and expense for a small addition to my home. Just thought you should know. Thanks, Jeff "Shecky" Schechter

HIRE PEOPLE WHO CARE..AND TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR JOB NOBODY DOWN THERE CARES ABOUT HELPING THE CUSTOMER MY OPINION IS MOST OF THEM ARE JUST COLLECTING A PAY CHECK AND ARE NOT IN ANY HURRY TO GET ANYTHING DONE..ALOT OF THEM ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO DO THEIR JOB OR ARE NOT TRAINED TO DO IT

I am an electrical contractor. One or two people in the link center were nice---the others could not have cared less about helping me or taking time to explain anything. Actually,

it was not a pleasant experience. This is two times that I have had an unpleasant experience and I will be happy to go further if you desire.

I am glad that you asked! I am angry at the amount of time I wasted conducting a simple task. I believe myself to be a detailed person and capable of understanding the importance of proper procedure and documentation. I do not know if I was judged on race, age, gender or attire...but I was not treated well by the office of Mr. David Arciniega. I placed a request on 06/02/2005 for a certificate of occupancy. Additional information was needed and I met with Mr. Arciniega. He did not identify himself or his office accordingly. He did not have a sample of the document or any written information that I could take to the property owner. He did not provide his work schedule, an alternate contact person or contact information. The documentation was sent by facsimile multiple times and his office denied having received the information although transmission reports were provided. It would take several telephone calls and three additional visits to look for Mr. Arciniega to obtain the certificate on 06/07/2005. I do not know if he dumbed down the conversation. I do not know if he believed my responsibilities are not as important as his...but it sure seemed that way. My frustration? Poor communication skills and lack of explanation on his behalf. What did I expect? Something like this..." I (we) apologize for the inconvenience, your request requires additional information. It may take up to 2 business days to review the information once we receive it. Here is a sample (list) of what we need from the property owner or you." I believed Mr. Arciniega was an office clerk. I did not know he was in the field or in meetings. The tall Hispanic man with the gold ring, looked lost he could not be of service to me, either. The receptionists were indifferent and never greeted me. I did give a greeting card to a customer service representative who works in the lobby. you see, the bottom line is how you treat people ... it is not what you say, it is how you say it. Yes, I was treated like a short, fat, illiterate Mexican woman that by all intended purposes should be in the kitchen making tortillas... ARGH! I am a lifelong San Antonian and hope that as our beloved city grows that customer service at the One Stop office improves for our sake.

I am with a local sign company and since the dismissal of Nick Harris the service has been at best poor, With David Simpson at the helm (hired on with no experience in the sign industry) the department has been hesitant to issue permits for "standard" jobs such as channel letters for new retail clients. I do not understand why? I have had many talks with the sign department and they keep saying that it will get better, but as far as the present it has not. As I am writing you this email, one of my "retail clients" called me to ask when is my sign going up? Well the sign is ready, wall is ready but I cannot get my permit out of the city!!! I have lived here all my life and watched the city grow in a controlled manner this is the best place to live in the country, please help keep letting us grow. The sign inspectors work very hard to do their jobs. I hope that in the near future we can put someone who has the experience to do the job, not just a degree to look pretty. I have left numerous messages with David Simpson and haven't gotten return phone calls for weeks at a time, with usually the same answer I'll have to get back with you, why? doesn't he know? Please look into the department there are many qualified individuals who can take the ball and run with it, please please give them the ball.

I appreciate the fact the the City of San Antonio strongly participates in all aspects of the construction process, however, there were specific individuals that made the entire Inspection process completely undesirable. There are many good people that work out of the S Alamo Office but a handful that give the City San Antonio a reputation of being a difficult and undesirable place to build. This concerns me in that I am from San Antonio and I look forward to prosperous growth and new business. It is pittyful that a handful of individuals give the entire City a bad reputation. As a tax payer in the City of San Antonio, it is my opinion that we should offer jobs to educated Inspectors and employees who look forward to helping those who build in our City rather than finding ways to make their lives more difficult and stressful. I would like to recognize Mr. Stricker (Chief Plumbing Inspector) for his willingness to help expedite all aspects of the inspection process as well as all the Girls that work at the Service Desk. They put up with a lot of frustrated builders, as I saw first hand.

I basically wanted to know if the construction of sidewalks were in the plans for my street. This street is used largely by kids and parents walking to Vestal elementary. The road is also in bad conditions that children and parents have to walk in the middle of the street. When I visited the center to inquire about information, all I was told that my name and phone number would be refer to the right department. I never heard anything anymore but a month later we were called with an estimate of the sidewalk cost to my property. When I left the center that day of my visit, I felt like I had not been provided the proper service. When I received the call, it was evident that the clerk had not listen to my concern.

I felt the staff did not fully understand the issues the concerned me such as tree preservation. The information I received from the city staff did not agree with the information I received from more than one civil engineer.

I found out if you know the people at higher level the work is done faster and I don't want to comment what other methods people use to get work faster

I generally felt as though I was an outsider "gringo" was the term I heard used occasionally.

I had faxed the necessary paperwork TWICE but the clerk, who had her purse on her shoulder and kept reminding me that they closed shortly never bothered to check that HER fax machine had no paper. Meanwhile she was being surly and hinting that I had never faxed the documents. When I asked her to check her fax machine, she discovered that it had been faxed along with several other documents.

I had the feeling that the people staffing the various stations were not adequately trained to perform their jobs and did not have the knowledge to navigate the computer system.

I have been in the construction industry for over 25 years. I dread having to deal with the city developmental dept. In my opinion someone needs to clear out the deadwood. If this dept had to operate in business in the real world it would be out of business in 6 months. The prevailing attitude down there is indifference. In a past experience I was trying to get

a C of O and was trying to confirm that approval of city inspections had been called in so I could pick up the C of O. I stood in line with about 8 people in line behind me waiting and listening to a group of about 5 city employees talk about how they cook bar-b-que ribs. These employees stood with their back to me 10 feet away not acknowledging my or any of the people in line's presence for over 25 minutes. I bit my tongue because I know from past experience that if you were to "annoy" them they would send you on a wild goose chase. The joke in my company is that if you want their attention in trying to get a C of O you need to go down there with a box of donuts. Out of principle, I will not play that game. I have built several buildings for World Savings and Loan who employs thousands of people in this city and it pains me to see how the city treats them through the bldg. permit process. This town is unfriendly to business that help bring us jobs that pay taxes that pay city employees salaries. They do not get it. Everybody said that the one-stop was going to improve the situation. That has not been my experience. Good luck cleaning this place up Phil. I would welcome it.

I started this process in 2/05, everytime the inspector comes the story changes. We are still waiting for DSD to call us back. We called yesterday and spoke to the Mr. Martinez. He added another two inspections. I said- we have been more than three times in the s. alamo office, why they did not tell us what we needed to complete the project and we were told that they only give permits not information. My plumber says that we do not need an inspection we are waiting for a response from DSD again [name removed]

I visited the One-Stop shop and was exposed to the previous system where we went from building to building. This is much more user friendly. Alicia Castillo, Fernando De Leon, Valerie Gleason, and Hillary (whom last name I did not get) all were informative but most of all, helpful. The only sour mark I personally witnessed was a residential reviewer heard the infamous, now serving "ding" at 4:38, and yelled, what is going on? There was no one here at 4:30 and now this! Needless to say, the customer walked to the window and apologized for building his home in San Antonio, and was told "It is not your fault. We have a problem we need to address." Everyone stopped what they were doing and were generally shocked and stunned. My process, which I reviewed over the Internet, was very smooth and easy. I simply did what I was asked, hired reputable, professional contractors to do the work, and it was very smooth. I really have high regards about the system. I would think that some people may get in a hurry and get impatient, or not follow directions, which could cause "red tape" delays. I commend the service. I think, as with all business, the last 45 minutes are critical and maybe close at 4:30 but finish with whoever makes it in the building.

I was originally told to go to the City office at West Ave and Blanco to get a occupancy permit to turn on the electricity. I was informed there that I needed to go downtown to apply. I go downtown, walk in and the woman at the information desk was on the phone. After standing there waiting for awhile, the security officer asked me what I needed. I told him, he gave me a number and told me to go to the counter across from the cashier's. The girl there told me I needed to go to someone at the counters in the middle. I saw a woman that had 'commercial' on her desk, helping no one, told her what I needed and asked if she could help me. She asked me if my number had come up and explained the number system. My number was 601 and the number on the wall was 400 (there was

maybe six people waiting in the chairs). The security officer came by and said I needed to fill out an application. So he took me over to get one and I sat down in one of the chairs to fill it out. The security officer came back and said the woman I spoke with at 'commercial' said she would help me since she wasn't helping any one at the time.

I WAS TOLD THAT AN IDIVIDUAL WAS GOING TO CALL ME BACK. THIS NEVER HAPPEN.

I went to the Dev Svcs Bldg to make a small change to a permit application required by the architect on the project. I waited approx 30 min for a specific person I was told I had to talk with to make this change. Although the first people I spoke to at the desk were friendly and helpful, I got the impression from the last gentleman that I was a bit of a bother to him. All ended well. The change was made and he seemed ok at the end. He probably just had a bad day.

I would like to see them more attentive and polite.

I would think , that the permitting process as a whole, would be generally smoother if the people involved would understand that most projects bring jobs and revenue to the City of San Antonio. How about a little cooperation? However, I was pleased with the mechanical and electrical plan reviewers of the blue team. But the plumbing reviewer needs an attitude adjustment.

If I had not had a person with me with the experience of getting a permit, I would not have known what to do or ask for. Your staff does not help much if you do not know your way around. I think the process went better because I had someone with me.

If it is possible send the office people out in the field sometime for field experience.

If reviewers could return phone calls or e-mail responses sooner, that would be good...

If the city is attempting to represent customer service and satisfaction, they have failed the test.

In general, Seems that some of the individuals I dealt with were inexperienced and could not provide answers to questions about comments that were made during plan review and were more than difficult when asked to provide a reference in the building code that relates to the comment in question. Apparently, the plan checkers are always corect and do not want to be questioned. I have been an engineer in San Antonio for more than 30 years and am quite familar with the building codes and the staff does not like to be questioned because it appears they are the EXPERTS.

In general, there is still a frustrating amount of professional incompetence, disorganization, and bureaucratic ambivalence on service from most city employees.

inspectors are generally rude and abusive with their authority. their language is almost always inappropriate. respect is lacking .

Inspectors are not responding to calls for inspection quick enough. Sometimes a week or more may go by before the inspector shows up for an interim progress inspection.

It seems that most of the people who staff the plan review intake do not have a clue what they are doing.

It seems to me that this could be an easy process. But the people that I dealt with in the commercial review services, seem to be eager to make the process difficult. I am in the commercial construction business, for one of the largest firms in San Antonio, I am a professional and have been in the business for 20 plus years. I know how to read drawings and it seems to me every time I have to go down there I am playing baby sitter for someone who has an agenda to prove. I realize that sounds harsh, but to sum up my frustrations of getting permits, I dread going down there b/c I know I am about to waste half of my day. I would rather run my hand through a meat grinder than deal with MOST of the people that I have had to deal with at the city. Please provide people who want to help, want to make the process non combative, and someone with a little knowledge of what's going on.

It sometimes seems that the staff person at the Fire Department booth isn't really interested in the job he is doing. Most of the time when I go in he has a bad attitude, or acts as if he is "doing me a favor" by being there. He is not cut out to be in a customer service oriented position.

It takes phone call after phone call after phone call over weeks to get a response

Just that phone calls be answered more often and when left a message that the call be returned. The staff makes it seem like you are bothering them and to me being an ex state employee they are there to serve the public.

Many of the workers at Development Services are not friendly. They make you feel like you are bothering them. They almost never do anything quickly. It is like they want you to suffer as much as possible before completing your transaction. It is a dreaded task to have to deal with Development Services. But, on rare occasions you get someone who is helpful, happy, and eager to assist you.

My biggest concern is the lack of the number of technically qualified staff support.

My experience as have been others is that: There are not enough inspectors the inspectors have too many inspections to do return visits take too long to complete There is an "us vs them" attitude among many of the inspectors as opposed to "how can we be of assistance to get you in compliance" The many millions spent on the one stop center has not led to the working together of the departments as it should have. For the amount of the fee's charged on the building permits, there ought to be more service rendered when the homeowner has problems to "work out solutions" and guide us through the process more easily. The solutions to our building process were not offered visibly up front so it added to significant time delay, approvals which should not happen in a "one stop" total solutions situation.

My experience was primarily over the phone and the person I spoke with was absolutely rude. I work in land development have to deal with these people often. It's a shame the transactions don't go more smoothly and without major attitude.

My first thought after the initial meeting with the Commercial Department, "I'm in an IRS Office". No help, no suggestions, no answers. Just UDC. UDC needs to go! We met this nice young gentleman, David Demoline who helped and guided us through what we needed. There were also a few department supervisors and personnel who were very helpful.

My plumbing inspection was completed by an inspector from another area. The inspector in my area was called for irrigation, and was totally out of line by demanding that the job stop because he had never done an inspection on the home. My client became quite alarmed, as did myself at his arrogant behavior. After causing this disturbance, he learned that the inspection had been done by another inspector. I believe that a charge for a red tag was imposed, but I have ignored it.

My wife had a bad previous experience from a man that was rude and failed to help her out. A contractor in line had to help her.

need to be more customer service friendly.

No sense of urgency. Typically very difficult to get something completed the first try. Each you try to submit for a permit or C of O there is usually something in the computer that stops the process. Nobody takes responsibility for the computer issues and usually have to resolve person to person with the inspector. For example, just recently applied for C of O but could not receive because of a plumbing inspection even though there was no plumbing work performed and was not even required for review by the plumbing plan reviewer. Could not get Central Records to release even though plumbing inspector cleared the permit verbally. Was very difficult to get issue resolved took multiple trips to Development services each time we assured issue was resolved. Need some take responsibility of the computer system. Nobody is empowered to take action, very reactive environment.

Nobody seems to be in a hurry, they are on the phone with personal calls while people wait.

Not Consistent with procedures & process

Our experiences with development services has been an absolute nightmare. They act as if they don't want any development in San Antonio unless you are a big corporation. Whenever I complete the tasks at hand that they give me, it seems they always need something else which always takes weeks to get approved or a ton of cash that I just don't have. I built my restaurant and received my C of O this past February with a ton of resistance from the city it wasn't until I received assistance from Ron Segovia that I was able to get the project finished. Now I am trying to enclose an existing patio to help facilitate my need for storage as well as waiting area and now it seems as if there are a ton of new regulations. I can't even fill the current occupancy of 93 because I had to take

tables out to make room for people waiting for orders. I finally gave up and asked them if I could just put a roof over the patio and they told me that they probably will not approve it because I probably will just close it in. They act as if they are above the law, it's almost as if they enjoy making your life miserable. A contractor told me to build it without permit that it would be easier but I thought I would follow the rules but it turns out he was right they were just going to turn a small project into a huge problem. He said it's better to ask forgiveness than permission especially when it comes to doing business with those miserable people down on Alamo Street. I wish you could come talk to me in person down at Big Lou's Pizza. Thanks for letting me vent. Sincerely [name removed]

people that are supposed to be taking care of your business were on the internet chatting online. very disrespectful.....

Personel has no experience. Have to depend on someone else to make a decision or ask the right questions.

Phone service (return calls) is horrendous! A better efficient way of communication could be via email perhaps.

plan reviewers need training in what they are reviewing. They only know what is in there little box. A developer has to explain way to much for them to understand

Plans (our response to comments by a plan reviewer) sat on the plan reviewers desk for weeks, unacknowledged, despite numerous calls to the reviewer, all of which were never returned. Dept. manager said he would talk to the reviewer but nothing appeared to happen. We went to the one stop to meet with the manager, without an appt. because he stopped returning our calls. We arrived at the one stop after lunch around 1PM, and we waited until 3PM to see him, as he was "out to lunch" until that time. The construction delays in this project were a direct result of the city's lack of concern, professionalism and responsiveness and cost the client over \$100K.

same ole service, if you don't know or ain't sure what you want please don't waste their time

Since the site of the project is inner city, the staff had difficulty with issues and got confused, which confused the client and me. The overall time to get the permit was 6 months. Both my client and myself went to Development Services several times, and in spite of these meetings "things" just fell through the cracks. We were not clearly notified of what was holding up the permit, (even on the website), so it took several actual meetings to close issues. I couldn't get phone calls or emails back. At one point, after 2 weeks of calling someone at the offices I went down to the building and the receptionist told me that the individual was away from their desk. I nicely asked if a note could be put on her desk and I would wait in reception. After close to an hour, I went to the receptionist and she finally called the desk, the lady was there but the note that the receptionist was so unclear, the employee had no idea I was waiting. The note only had my name; it did not say I was upfront in the reception area. I share this example as it shows that lack of communication is a systemic problem in that department. I don't think

left hand / right hand works together. No one follows thru, and it takes serious bird-dogging to get anything out of development services. I expended a lot of time, which translates to expense. My recommendation is better training of existing employees, and probably adding employees, as there seems to be a shortage for the amount of work they process. Good luck Mr. Mayor on your endeavor, and many thanks for asking my opinion.

SMILE PLEASE if I worked for the City I'd have a huge grin just to know where I work and who I represent (it is so hard to get a job with COSA) so enjoy it regardless of where they have you, you are representing us.

Some individuals at the VV office were more helpful than others. Some had "attitude"

Some of the employees were delightful, those employees where in upper management. Customer care employees are not as delightful and accommodating. My visit with these people made me felt that they didn't want me there or they just wanted to hurry up and get me out of there. They had the "authority attitude".

Some of the staff need to give more solutions and honest time frames of when they will review plans.

some of your personnel treat you like your a dummy and they have the power of a god

Some of your staff have an "attitude" problem, which includes a P.E. and other "clerk-types".

Some reviewers knowledgable, others marginal

Staff do not stay consistent with their decisions from project to project

Staff is generally very helpful and courteous to me, but I'm a frequent user of services and have a long-term, good relationship with most Development Services staff. To me, the most important thing is for staff to treat all people as customers in the truest sense. They should work to figure out how to help people get what they need in the most efficient and easiest manner possible.

Staff needs to return telephone calls and answer emails on a timely manner. We should receive the same requirements from each of the staff members and not personal opinions or conflicting information from one project to the other.

Staff was misinformed about their own internal rules, and threatened to take away (retroactively) two permits already issued in the same building if the supposed issue was not resolved. A meeting was scheduled with a superior, he related that the staff had misunderstood the rule and that there was no problem. Unfortunately, this is all too common an occurrence.

Staff was rude and fighting with each other about project. very very poor service

staff was rude and not very helpful

Takes to long and gov or city emp do not exp serv

The attitude of "Let's Get It Done" does not exist in this department. Instead it has been repalced with "We will eventually get there". What I mean by this is that the staff here seems quite content to operate at the slowest speed possible.

The City inspectors were making every effort to deny ANYTHING that was presented. There was a very advisarial relationship between the City and applicant.

The clerks and some of your reviewers do not understand why certain items are necessary and why certain items are not necessary and of no value. This is due to just inexperience with actual construction.

The counter did not have enough people working and when we were at the desk, the meeting was interrupted by a phone call. I need to have the persons full attention.

The department needs more efficiency. The plan reviewers are sluggish and ergo slows down on development.

The downtown office as for my opinion would need more customer service to attend the customers since you take about two hours to get a permit or sometimes to find out we are missing information and to come back again.

The EDD has been extremely helpful with helping us get information about our project out to the local community.

The inspectors tend to be not only lazy but lacking in knowledge related to their assumed expertise.

The MDP review process has no established time frames by Code. Staff never would commit to a date when reviews would be finished. It was always "next week." It took over 5 months for some responses.

The people at the one stop center don't act as if the people entering through the front door are customers. They act as though they are bothered to do their jobs.

The people at this office are arrogant and have no intention of helping the customers. The process to recieve a permit for a simple finish-out can take months. They do not tell you all that is required then chastise you for not having all the information that they change daily.

The permit deparment was good to work with, but the fire marshall office is very slow and not very helpful at all.

The plan reveiw staff as a whole has a lot of big brother additude about it. I work all over the country and it seems to be a universal trait. When you question why a certain

comment was made, the the bottom line response after they felt they had given the answer is: "Well do want a permit or maybe I can re review this and find some additional comments? Plan reviewers must recognize that ultimately it is not a we versus us. They are working to get a permit for a tax paying citizen who has already spent a lot of money to get to this point. They are not denying the architect or contractor, they are playing with someone elses money. Especially if a particular comment is not life threatening.

the problem i have is the staff is more interested in their personal affairs than working to move the personal along to get what ever business the public has to get done. your staff is always on the phone with personal issues and it seems there is only one person that can issue permits when the most people are waiting. on average the time for me to get a permit has been 1 hour. this is 1 hour that i as a business man do not have. In the old location ,with the old system i could get a permit in 15 minutes. the system has gone in the wrong direction. if you want to make it better, have your staff focus on their job, not the events of the prior day or weekend.

The professionalism of all the people that I have encountered at the Inspection Sections is second to none!

The rules seem to change depending on who is at the counter. Some are helpful and thorough. Others are not. We have a problem with plans being lost or not processed in a timely fashion, requiring multiple follow-up calls to get the plans approved for construction.

The staff at the one stop, basically most employees that are employed by the city usually are unfriendly and unwilling to help- this includes the city employees that are employed with SAPD. I have to say the city employees are a different type of breed of people. Usually lazy and unwilling to lend a helping hand. I must say city employees are always quick to jump to the chance to take off early or take off time because of the "time-off" benefits that are provided by the city but are not "earned" by the employees. Maybe all the city employees need a bust on customer service and work etiquette.

The staff does a poor job of sharing information regarding code interpretations - Both between each other and with the design professionals. You can have a meeting with one plans examiner, get an answer to your question, submit your plans for review and get put on hold by another plans examiner who gives a different interpretation. Your plans can land with the same examiner and STILL get placed on hold because he has changed his interpretation since your meeting. One such examiner then told me "You can't hold me accountable for what I tell you in our meetings".

The staff has no concept of the urgency for the need for the permit. It was submitted in June and we received it on October 25, 2005. In fact to get the permit we had to contact the city managers office. Just think how long it would have taken if the city managers office was not contacted

The staff in the Conservation district need to be reminded that they also work for the citizens of the neighborhood and not solely the Neighborhood Conservation District. My experience seemed one-sided, and favorable to only the NCD.

The staff looked like they were just slacking off between servicing customers wasting time doing nothing or on the phone. I think they attitude was very unprofessional.

The staff needs to be more educated about thier job description and duties. Lack of knowledge.

the staff obviously gets paid on fridays because if they were self employed they would be broke the attitude is like their doing me a favor and i am bothering them they act like I am supposed to know everything when I ask a question especially a young girl with short black hair she works in the permit department been there about 5 years when i go in for a permit i hope i never have her to service me she always talks down to me like i am some idiot and the last time i was there i had to set her straight and the inspectors they think they are GOD maybe you should remind them that they work for the citizen of San Antonio and not they other way around i am not a contractor i am a individual who buys houses and repairs them and all my sub contractors and my self obtain permits for my houses we all pay permit fees some one should remind them where their checks get funded

The staff there does not seem to take the time to explain what is needed to make the process more pleasant, they have the attitude that we should know all the regulations and process. The answers are vague. More one on one, step by step is needed

the staff tried to pick point any problem so that I would not be able to start the project.

The upper level staff at DSD is extremely cooperative, although burdened by a heavy workload. Problems I have encountered in the past deal with individuals at the counters, that have the initial contact with the public; a tendency to be overly bureaucratic.

There has always and continues to exist, an attitude amongst civil servants that; "you need us, we are doing you a favor by serving you." As a taxpayer I find this attitude enraging.

there is absolutely no sense of urgency with the staff at the one stop center - they take days on what should take hours - they lose papers and could care less that it cost small business thousands...absolutely terrible experience....and I have built three businesses in three years and had the same experience on all three projects. San Antonio has developed a bad reputation amongst business folks, contractors, etc....regarding how hard it is to build anything in a timely fashion due to the city...the joke is the "one stop" is called that because your paperwork stops on a desk and never moves.

There is little consistency within and between departments. Although some members of the staff are very helpful; many seem to treat the customers as though they are there to do you a favor, not to provide a service. One example of a possible improvement would be with commercial plan intake. I as a contractor try to arrive early to avoid the bottleneck

that occurs at plan intake. Employees will often arrive on time, sit at there desk and not acknowledge myself or others leaving us guessing as to do they know were here, are they doing work from yesterday or do they just not want to start working yet. It is my opinion that the employees of that office are servants to the community. If this is a correct statment then the employees should act as such. If this is not a correct statment then myself as well as other contractors should be made aware of this.

There should be more accountablity in returning phone calls in the plan review department-- Or even answering the phone for that matter. I have called many times to plan reviewers' direct numbers and not received a return call for at least three or four days. Accountability of email among the employees would be nie as well. I feel as if you are understaffed for an economy which is booming the way it is. It takes a minimum of two months to obtain a new commercial construction permit. It drives up the cost of construction if you take that long. I have gotten plans that are stamped an approved, but the inspector says it needs to be built differently which can and has resulted in thousands of dollars of changes. It seems the right hand has no idea what the left one is doing.

They did not greet us and talked to other people behind me while I was in front of them. They were a little rude.

This city dept., to me, was a major overall disappointment. It has many problems. I am a small business owner who expected to be helped, directed, and informed in a knowledgeable, courteous and, professinal manner; none of the above happened through several departments. The staff with the exception of the receptionist, has no understanding what their purpose is. I felt no understanding, empathy, or concern. It seems that often, I was either a disturbance or a means of someone keeping their job (unnecessary, petty procedures). With the exception also of the cashiers, there is very little personality in this department. I am glad that I got to speak to the mayor there and voice a few of my concerns. He seems to have a genuine concern to make things better. My experience has somewhat given me an understanding of why people do business the way they do with the city.

This particular visit went quite nicely. I was there to visit the supervisor of an employee who was creating unnecessary delays and whose attitude toward me and any inquiries on the status of the permit (this was a modification to the permit) was completely unprofessional and disrespectful. The visit that the survey is pertaining to was with Mr. DeLeon who was extremely helpful and provided the permit necessary. But his assistance was sought after 1-2 months of frustration.

This survey seems related only to the pleasant nature of staff during my "visit". I don't see where to comment that staff has taken months to do their work to resolve the code related issues that we have been seeking to resolve.

Timely phone responses to the status or a plan review would be nice.

Very few staff ever return calls. I consistantly call 15 to 30 times before I get a human to talk to. It seems as though staff goes out of their way to delay all permits. In one case I

submitted the exact same building plan 3 times(to be built on side by side lots} over a 6 month period and was turned down for entirely different items each time.

Visit was to drop off Engineer's letters for project. I waited over 30 minutes before anyone even spoke to me. Then my letters were never entered into the computer system and I had to bring them back the next week to turn them in again.

Was emailed a form to use, only to be told it was the wrong form at time of submission. Indignant employee who refused to accept application because non-applicable items were not filled in, ex., certification and calculations that lighting meets energy code where only a small office area was remodeled in an existing high school; Reviewers constantly seem to interpret the Codes differently from project-to-project.

Was told that I would pay \$38.50 upfront for applying for permit and then \$87.00 when approved. I just recieved call that my permit is ready and the cost \$130.73.

We are a constuction company, and we work in a lot of cities around the State. The City of San Antonio's inspectors are the worst. They are rude and high handed. They do not return phone calls (I call him both at the office and on his cell). It take at least 2 day to get an inspection after you call it in. They red tag on the first inspection every time. (That is for any contractor that is not from San Antonio or is not hispanic) WE HATE DOING JOBS IN SAN ANTONIO. This city has the rudest people in it. If you complain then you can for get every getting a green tag on an inspection. - YOU ASKED -

We got all the permits except Building. The reviewer was difficult, as he would not accept or return phone calls and would not agree to a meeting. It took weeks to get our building permit - we got fire, plumbing and fire between 8/16 and 9/7, but did not get building until 10/18. There was no excuse for the reviewer not to agree to see us or at least take a phone call. Finally Permit Express went over his head and we got things rolling.

We have come to expect no service, no support, no response, no flexibility....

We need people that fully understand what is needed and required for plan review. We have to spend too much time going back and forth because each time we submit something one person tell us we need certain items and when we bring in that info the next person tells us we need something else. Getting answers via phone or email takes days. Trying to get some trade inspectors to return calls is impossible. My general feeling is city employees are just there for thier check not to really help anyone. Their are some that really try to help but more that don't. Thanks

We need to make some changes and they should start at the top. It seems to be the M.O. of 98% of the employees down there to strive to find fault and relish when they are able to find a reason to NOT issue you a permit, C of O, etc. They need to act as a service organization.

Well, the project was to be a Residential rebulid of an existing storage facilitiy in the King William District and was moved to the commercial side due to the building having

multiple family status to the property previously. The owner 1st went in to obtain the permit and was asked by Mr. SanMiguel why the contractor had not come in to get the permit, is he licensed, he asked, As a man with a contracting company was standing at the counter next to my client. "Hey give her your card, he does contracting work and he is licensed", he went on to say. "You should not have given this man any money up front as you did" Needless to say that my client was upset and untrusting and left and called me to tell me what had transpired. I went back the next day to confront Mr. SanMiguel and he back-peddled to say... something different as to twist the story around. Anyway my point in this matter is that I don't feel it appropriate to have one of your own soliciting business for those who seek permits. Not only is it a conflict of interest but the legal ramifications and liability should one accept.

When calling 207-8250 personnel could really benefit from customer service training. Upon trying to request a building inspection I am told that our request cannot be scheduled due to "minor plan review." We are a manufactured home community and it is my understanding that this should not be an issue. Everytime this happens I have to email Fernando DeLeon to get a release. On a good note Mr. DeLeon has always been very efficient in getting this cleared up.

When ever the staff (in this case) at the Fire Department window is away for a schedule meeting it would be nice to know so a person can re schedule the visit in lieu of standing around for over one hour assuming the staff member will soon return as the sign at the window indicates.

When going to obtain permits at the alamo st place. Even if obtaining numbers it always seem to take long. The employees need to stay off the phone and quit ignoring the people. They need to be more courteous and leave there problems at home. It seems that they are bored and don't get enough sleep. One contractor told me that he was told not to take to many applications for permits especially before 4:00 pm. That is why I like to go to Vally View but there are times that they sent us to the alamo st. place because for some reason or other it has to be handed at the alamo st.

When I go to the Development Services Department I notice several people surfing the internet. I have observed as as many as 20 people waiting to see one of the several people surfing. These people don't realize that we as Owners are not paid by the hour like they are and need to make things happen in a timely fashion in order to stay profitable. I see this everytime I am at this office. I think you need to make these people realize how much money and time they are costing people when they are not doing the job they are hired to do. Another area that needs a great deal of attention is the Fire Plan checker. This is the most difficult department and the lengthiest part of getting a building permit. My thought on this problem is get rid of the dead weight in a couple of your departments and hire more plan checkers in the Fire department.

When I take a plan in for a permit if there is a problem and it is turned down it is difficult to find out why in a timely manner. When I phone and leave a message with a plan checker most of the time I have to make multiple calls and leave messages to get them to respond.

When requesting inspections: namely; Mr. Allan Rushs' inspectors, I have lost much time and money due to their slow response time sometimes taking up to 2 weeks for inspections. I feel this department needs revamping and restructuring in order to obtain favorable and justifiable inspection results. Please look into this area and investigate the older current inspectors practices. Thank you. [company name removed]

When visiting the Development services dept. I always notice a lot of people walking around and visiting with the other personnel and I notice only a couple of staff working with customers and a of un-occupied (empty) stations.

While staff is often helpful at in person meeting, getting hold or responses from them via phone or email is often very difficult. Differences in enforcement/interpretation between staff members and constantly changing interpretation of the ordinance itself at the department level (typically the Landscape and Tree Preservation) make getting approvals a moving target.

While the chief inspector was excellent and very helpful when we called on the phone, the people we dealt with in person were anything *but* helpful. We were told repeatedly an inspector would come, but one would never show. When calling to request again, were told we were 'out of the loop'. It was only when we talked with the Chief Inspector, who personally came to review the work that our issues were addressed.

While waiting for service, employees appeared more concerned with personal phone calls, taking breaks, or taking excessive time with customers by telling jokes, or flirting if customer was female.

While waiting the staff was too busy visiting with each other, getting coffee, and generally away from the stations while the public sat and watched. Additionally, there was few stations open and a large group of public waiting on them.

You have a wonderful new facility whereby we can see whomever is at a station. My observation was that instead of waiting on customers, there was a lot of yakking, snack taking, and telephone conversations which were not work related. In summary, I believe your review people are not motivated. In addition, when plans are approved they tend to loose them in the "vault". Most of the people at the "1 stop counter" do not have the experience to deal with situations that are not in the computer. Your people are often not at the counter. There are up to 20 stations and I have never seen more than 6 people at work at a time.

You have some wonderful people over there. Sandy Jenkins is a standout. My real problems were with the Zoning people. If you wish, we can discuss that via e-mail – **[email address removed]**

Your staff was adequate, however, the city may want to invest in training to help their employees be much more customer service oriented, and friendlier.

The issue is with the inspectors, who have some sort of personalilty issues. It is as if they must strut and parade. Staff at the center are courteous. The inspectors are rude and condescending.

The problem was with the delay in getting an historic review person to come downstairs to OK the permit. He was very arrogant. I felt like I was disturbing his day.

Negative Comments Regarding Conflicts between Plan Review and Field Inspection

1.LOTS OF FINGER POINTING BETWEEN SERVICE CENTER AND INSPECTORS CAUSING LOTS OF DOWN TIME AND AT TIMES LOST OF CUSTOMERS 2.FOR SOME REASON CPS WORK WITH RELEASE ALWAYS HITS A SNAG BETWEEN SERVICE CENTER AND CPS AFTER INSPECTOR HAS RELEASED WORK WITH HERE AGAIN LOTS OF FINGER POINTING AND CUSTOMERS GET UPSET AT THE WAITING GAME.3. TRYING TO MAKE AN APOINTMENT WITH INSPECTOR FOR AN INSPECTION ESPECIALLY RESIDENTIAL IS HARD TO DO. OWNERS ARE OFF THAT SCHEDULED PART OF DAY OR THE WHOLE DAY TO LET US IN FOR INSPECTION. MY SCHEDULE HAS TO BE FLEXABLE AND INSPECTOR CAN'T BE THERE TILL THE FOLLOWING DAY. HOME OWNERS GET UPSET AND THIS IS WHY LOTS OF PERMITS ARE LEFT OPEN

City staff was professional, and helpful. Many of the city building codes seemed petty, yet city employees must "cover" themselves by enforcing codes that don't make sense. For instance, we had to have an ADA approved sidewalk connecting our parking lot to the city sidewalk. We were careful to meet ADA regulations with our sidewalk. The city sidewalk was not level where we joined our new sidewalk. Rather than leveling the city sidewalk, our sidewalk failed the inspection. It cost another thousand dollars to pour another sidewalk. During construction, the fire dept. checked out our new building to develop a plan in case of a fire. They noted the fire hydrant across the street, but I told them there would be a hydrant on the property as required by the city. Even the fire department said they did not feel that was necessary and said we could apply for an exemption, because we were building a virtual "fire proof building". It is all metal, sheetrock, and concrete block. Our application for exemption was denied. The fire hydrant not only added \$30,000.00 to the cost of the project, but now we are responsible for maintaining it and having annual inspections. Again the city staff was helpful and often sympathetic, but ultimately had to enforce senseless codes.

I believe that the "one-Stop" Center is truly better than the old location. The main issue or complaint I have is with the how inspector / inspection standards differ i.e. rough plumbing / electrical standards; plans are approved as submitted by one inspector but the on-site inspector wants it done in a manner completely different from the "APPROVED" plans. When questioned if guidelines / standards had changed since the plans were "APPROVED", he states "no, but it should have been caught earlier", etc. These differences cost the developer / owner time and money.

I do not like the fact that COSA gives you direction on an project and later changes their opinion. This is very troublesome and delaying as well as expensive in some situations.

I felt frustrated as I attempted to satisfy a code compliance violation, yet I was not permitted to construct an adequate accessory structure to meet my needs and satisfy code regulations.

I'm a regular at the development office and each time a permit is sought, the process and or requirements are different....it's a constant guessing game for simple finish out permits. Also, a big problem is the approval of plans at the development office only to have a field inspector disallow the very items that have been previously approved i.e., wall design related to fire codes, etc. It is VERY costly to build it as approved to only have a field inspector tell you otherwise and tell you it must be done their way or the inspection will not be passed!

In meeting with a site issue with Deleon and receiving engineer approval, Allan Rush inspector voided this approval costing my client an additional \$1,000.00 for a new grate over a sidewalk. We had installed former grate as per approved plan. Allan Rush stated "I don't care what the engineer said at Dev Svcs." He made the decision in the field!

Often required inspections are not supported by building code requirements. Staff(top) seems to have its "own" agenda. Have found in the past Dev. Services required inspections without code authority & could not explain its position.

One entity of the City does not know what the other is doing and they don't care. SAWS is the worst. Their inspectors overrule the Engineers who are supposed to have gone to advanced schooling to make policy and review construction documents. Contractors have installed equipment according to contract documents that have been permitted by the City, come time for inspection the jobs have been turned down by inspectors and the contractors have had to replace equipment at their or the owners expense.

One of the most significant problems is the disconnect between approved plans and individual inspectors. Inspectors many times change or even contradict elements on approved plans. This causes delay and added cost to every project. Perhaps inspectors should be in the office reviewing plans or working with the office personnel to develop consistency throughout the process.

Our company and our client has continually had poor experiences with the City of San Antonio on almost every level of a commercial project. The "one stop shopping" concept at the Dev. Ser. Bldg is a great idea but the personell and the system cannot execute and the system fails. Example: An inital developement meeting with key city building & FD officials was difficult to get information. When permit documents were submitted to these same individuals, thier review was NOT consistant with our inital discussions. After over three months of plan reviewing we received a permit. For the next six months of construction we fought with on-site inspectors because thier "opinion" differed from what was approved on the permit documents. Then the fire marshall was holding up the certificate of occupancy because on an un-substantiated request that was NOT approved during the permit process. I would like to say this is an isolated incident, but we have similar experiences on then current commercail project.

Our most recent experience with one stop and inspection services has not gone to good. We have had to make numerous field changes due to inspectors wanting something different that what had been previously approved. This has eventually led to the deletion of items (sidewalk and ramps) on a city project due to this issue.

Past experience; shows that what is agreed upon in the preliminary is not what is carried out in the field. You shouldn't have to have to argue over items previously agreed to.

Plan Review and Field Inspectors need to better coordinate their interpretation of Codes.

SEVERAL TIMES THE INSPECTORS IN THE FIELD DID NOT RELY INSPECTION RESULTS TO THE OFFICE. AT THE END OF THE PROJECT WHEN I SOUGHT A C OF O, IT TOOK DAYS TO CLEAR UP INSPECTIONS I HAD PASSED SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER. ALSO, I HAVE WORKED IN MOST OF THE MAJOR CITIES IN TEXAS, BUT ONLY SAN ANTONIO TOOK SEVERAL DAYS TO PERFORM ROUTINE INSPECTIONS WHICH SHUT MY PROJECTS DOWN. MOST CITIES PROMISE AN INSPECTION THE DAY FOLLOWING THE DAY IT WAS CALLED IN.

Sidewalk/curb plans had been pre-approved, signed off and then a new inspector decided to unapprove what had already been relied upon by owner and contractor causing enormous delays, loss of pre-leased, office tenant and much frustration until another supervisor overruled obstructing inspector. This project was in a blighted area which needed improvement and which was being positively effected by the project. All neighbors (residential and commercial) were already "on board" with their endorsement of the project. The City staff was a disappointment to all involved.

The plan review process should not be so different from the field inspectors. Too many times, we work with the plan reviewer to get plans approved. Then the field inspector has different oppinions and won't approve the work, costing the Owner's more money. Just ask anyone who knows Allen Rush.

The process of getting a building permit takes entirely too long. Also when the project is complete getting a C of O is very frustrating. I recently failed a Fire Alarm inspection because of a supposed violation of the elevator recall. I had to set up another fire inspection at a cost to me of \$875.00. This same "violation" occured with the new fire inspector. He said that it wasn't a violation and he passed the test. This happens all the time with the fire inspections.

There is a serious lack of communication between the one-stop personell, and the field inspectors.

Unfortunately, the Building Inspector was not in agreement with the Drainage Engineers design. It delayed project completion by 30 days.

The problem was we had a permit from the City, following their comprehensive review, only they changed the requirements in the field after the project was complete and required additional money be spent to get a C of O. This is not right. The inspectors in the field are only supposed to enforce what was already on the approved plans. This is very frustrating at the end of construction projects when the rules are changed on you. It happens more often than you would guess.

Negative Comments Regarding the Review Process, Organization, and Facility

1. I seldom bid on city projects due to the red tape, poor communications and slow pay.
2. When I do deal with permits I find the experience slow & uninformative. Furthermore, I follow the codes but know for a fact some other companies are "allowed" to do jobs I declined as illegal.

1. We feel your staff needs to be more thoroughly trained for their specific tasks. 2. The commercial plan intake department is consistently understaffed. 3. Water utilities and the Drainage departments are not located in the "One Stop" center - this clearly disrupts a timely plan review process. 4. The monthly newsletter is an excellent communication tool and is very informative. Recommend your newsletter be a monthly publication instead of quarterly. 5. Notify contractors of changes to the code prior to / or when the code changes, not months later or not at all. 6. Preliminary plan review decisions are not being always being adhered to during the plan review process.

A file clerk was substituted for a plan checker because the plan checker had to leave to take her son to the doctor. The file clerk had no previous experience. This process took over two hours. The normal time for this would have been about 20 minutes.

Actually, my most recent contact was on the phone and faxing applications and drawings. The only problem is that I was told that sign permits were running 3 wks. behind. I have a business owner who needs his signs now. Staff are good people. Thanks, Rick Lee

Although the process was pretty straight forward, the process involves too much red tape and areas of objectivity. Too many things were based on a person's mood and how he/she wished to look at a situation then about the code and guidelines mandated by the state and city

Although there are some at OneStop with great knowledge of the platting/engineering process, more expert help is needed. The number of work going through there may be causing delays in responding to e-mails and voicemails.

Appears to be too much fighting between city departments. No staff dedicated to overtime review of plan submittals in all areas. Payment for overtime not an issue!

Architects need to be able to get answers to questions related to code interpretation in an easy manner over the phone and thru the fax prior to a preliminary code review appointment.

Are fire alarm permits ever going to be accessible for viewing like the other trades?

As a customer who has dealt with the city in the same capacity for 12 years, I feel that with all the new multi-million dollar technology and facility, service should be more efficient. The fact is that it actually takes longer to apply for a Certificate of Occupancy

than it did before the one stop center. Instead of spending more money on technology there should be more time and money spent on hiring qualified staff to handle customer service both on the commercial and residential sides.

As a former City Employee for the City's Wastewater Department & SAWS in the capacity of land development review, I feel that city staff does not recognize the customers request as being important. Another item that I would love to see our new city manager do is to consolidate some of the review process. Right now, there are way too many people reviewing a plat or plans who are not working with one another to ensure the development as a whole is sound. This results in too many delays when there is no communication, which becomes very costly to the developers and builders.

As member of consulting engineering company, I rarely actually go get the actual permit. However, I have only had good experiences with COSA Code officials (typically Plumbing and Mechanical). I think they do a very good job. If I would ask for anything, fund positions for more of them so they are not so stressed.

Assignment of actual street numbers (addresses) was dissapointing. After number was assigned, it took too long to go through to the other City Services such as CPS, SAWS, etc. They all seemed very confused.

Better signage. When you walk in, there is not a sign showing what exactly you are suppose to do. Sometimes there are several people standing around so you do not know which line to get into to get the help that you need.

Building and MEP inspection of plans are afford after hours inspection to speed up the process but all the rest of the inspection of plans DON'T follow the same process. Example Fire inspection: They do not provide after hours inspection of plans, so therefore after hours inspections are of NO advantage to recieving your permit sooner. Another example is **AP # XXXXXX** for permitting. The inspection of the plans were all reviewed by building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and zoning as after hours. But once again fire has sat on the plan review since 10/12 and still has not looked at them. Please make all inspection of plans uniform so I'm not spending money for after hours only to fire or some other department NOT follow suit.

Complicated, confusing, expensive, time consuming. The only way I ever got my permit was by hiring a former San Antonio inspector to expedite the process.

Congratulations to the Historic Commission that is interested in the promotion and revitalization of all the historic downtown properties. The process through the Commission was fast, professional and smooth!!. Although, we strongly disapprove the service provided by the development services department. It was slow and unprofessional. Every time they would review our architectural and engineering plans they would make comments contrary to what they have said in our previous visit, depending on the reviewer. It is a shame to have this kind of service. Instead of promoting and making smooth the revitalization of downtown historic properties the DSD is blocking it and transforming it into a nightmare process!!.

contractors should be provided with up to date procedures on securing permits receiving inspections

COSA reviews of work performed and stamped by professionals is excessive. There is 16 different reviewers X 9 phases of construction equals 144 plan reviews and (correction letters) for one project. Hours spent dealing with COSA reviews and modifications was in excess of 1400 hours for this A/E (this does not include the clients hours). This adds up to well over \$100,000 in additional cost. Other states and cities have typically one correction letter per phase. The typical hours spent dealing with other code authorities is around 100 hours for an A/E. Modifications to common sense issues is excessive with COSA. Most jurisdictions have the authority to just agree to the common sense modifications and interpretations of the code so they can focus on bigger issues and not waste everyone time. Treating Industrial projects the same as residential or light commercial is ridiculous.

Customer service response time from City staff is very lacking. We are told city staff should respond to a customer with 24 hrs, via phone, fax or e-mail. Response time presently is averaging anywhere between 2 to 5 days.

Department did not seem sufficiently staffed. One person to handle all who approached the counter. After 20 minutes someone else showed up.

Downtown Office is still very busy at times, I think maybe they still need more people to get permits.

Due to the size of this city, the distance to travel and the value of people's time(including the city staff) every effort should be made to complete the process of the "one stop experience". An example would be where an extra copy of a plan, permit, drawing, etc. is needed to be submitted. Instead of sending the customer away to do this, simply have the equipment to do this for them and charge the customer the going rate plus a little more to cover the city's costs. The city could actually make money doing this, save time, gas, etc. and have a very happy customer. I had this happen to me and saw it happen to many other people while I was there. Invariably the customer would have to come back the next day to submit another copy.(time wasted) Another incident that left a bad taste in my mouth was having to go before the "Honorable Board of Adjustment" to get a variance on the height of a fence for security. The need for the extra height for security was plainly obvious to everyone at the city offices, but they could not make an independent decision due to the city code ordinances. I went before the board and was rejected by their lopsided need 9 of 11 votes to pass. What irked me more than anything was that many illegally built garages were passed but since I was the last person, dressed in a suit, well prepared and showing a real need, I was rejected for seemingly no apparent reason at all. Further, it was apparent that half of the board was either not listening or did not care. In other words more discretion should be given to the city officials at the city planning offices because they understand the process much better than the board of adjustments. Otherwise, I had a good experience with the people who work hard to develop relationships with contractors, developers, and citizens.

During process of working on permit, Historic was very helpful and primary counter rep was very helpful. Had returned to One Stop with info to clear last hurdle but primary rep was busy, number was called and had to go to different rep who added an additional requirement to process (structural engineer's letter for bldg to be demolished, stating that building was structurally sound- cost addl two weeks and \$750). One rep should be assigned to handle process all the way through for a specific project. One group of plan checkers and on-site inspectors should be assigned to handle urban/historic projects. Main issue - new city mgr should get entire city staff in Alamodome with a come to Jesus meeting stating policy is now "how can we help get this done" not "how can we scuttle this or create an archaic problem".

During review, in some instances, I never received any indication that more information was needed. It was left to me to discover this by constantly checking the on-line status, which didn't very clearly indicate who needed more information. It took a lot of time and checking back with the reviewers to confirm the status of their review and whether anything more was needed. In one case more information was needed from public works; rather than contacting them for the information needed, it was left up to me with very little direction as to what Development Services actually needed to satisfy the review. It was difficult and took a lot of time to stay up-to-date on the progress of the project and took a lot of additional effort on my part to figure out from Development Services what the holds were in order to get it through permitting. The Plan Review by Appointment is nice, but failed to get my project through the process any quicker as hoped.

Every single step takes an incredible amount of time!

Far too slow in serving customers.

Fire Alarm review takes way too long in this city. Most of our jobs can't wait for the review process, and the customer usually blames us. We do pay for overtime review on every submittal, but so does every other contractor. Makes it not worth it. Our company has been in business for going on five years here in San Antonio now, and we have paid an enormous amount of money to the city for review and permitting. Does this money ever get used to improve the process?

Fire Marshall seems to be the bottleneck in the process.

Fire plan checking is taking up too much time. Please hire more staff members for this position. Developers are losing thousands of \$\$s in interest due to the delay. Fernando Deleon is the most helping person we have ever met when dealing with city, any. Keep up the good work.

For inspections, we were told to complete certain items to pass inspection and when this was done and they came out they would still fail us and say we needed something else. All necessary items should be told at one time avoiding several reinspection trips and fees.

General Contractor is usually the one member of the Owner/Architect/Contractor team who is dependent on quick response. GC can help expedite process only if kept advised.

Generally the experience was better than expected, which is to say, it was better than in past experiences. That having been said, I feel that there is not strong communication between disciplines - meaning that when the electrical person is finished reviewing the plans, they can sit for a few days before the mechanical guy begins reviewing them & upon inquiry, the mechanical guy might state that the electrical review is not complete-bottom line, it is not a seamless progression and there are issues of disconnect between departments (as well as among teams). The worst experience was stormwater - they were totally out of the loop on the process & separate plans had to be delivered and picked up from them along with their certificate of approval which then had to be brought back to Development Services for integration into the overall permit system - not good at all!

Generally the personnel in Central records were helpful and in one instance went the extra mile to work with me on some issues. There are some areas for improvement, I would contact DS by telephone for information regarding certificates of occupancy or Tops permits, getting one answer to find the information often incorrect when I arrived at DS to complete the necessary transactions

Getting a set of plans approved from start to finish is quite a long process. On a couple of simple projects in the past I had to return to 5 and 6 time for approval. Each visit they pointed out more information that was needed. It would help if they would process the plans start to finish and then note all of the problem areas.

Getting face to face contact with the "right" person is difficult. Getting definitive answers is difficult. More often than not a visit to the One Stop Center leads to another visit because you cant get business finished on the first vist.

Give them more personnel. Need two more complete TEAMS to review the plans. If need to converse one on one over this topic please call me to set up a time for a visit. I have come to know the Development personnel since 1993 and Mr. Pena since his arrival to San Antonio. Thank You. **[name and number removed]**

Had problems with computer info. but that was a time period when city was changing over to new system. however everything worked out ok.

Have more than one or two individuals working.

having been a developer in S.A. for 30years,I would fire everyone in development services and start over the place is not salvagable.I am dead serious.

Having dealt with Dev. Serv. frequently, I am extremely sympathetic toward their tough job. I believe that they are grossly understaffed to handle the large amount of construction and development currently going on in San Antonio. I would like to see a system where each application is assigned a single 'case manager' who could liaise between the customer (us) and each department doing a review (plumbing, elec., etc) That way when we have questions we do not have to try to call up the electrical review dept, for example, and talk to the one guy who did our review and find out what is holding up our permit; that is practically impossible, those guys are never available. This 'case manager' would have to be very knowledgeable as well as

diplomatic; it would not be an easy job. There would also have to be a lot of them, so maybe the city could not afford that much of a staff increase. The process seems very disjointed as it is, and is designed to ensure an adversarial role between the city and its customers. But back to my first point: I believe Devel. Serv. is understaffed. Employees who are overworked get frustrated and gradually care less about thier job, especially when they have increasingly angry (and often unnecessarily unpleasant) customers to deal with. Oh, and by the way, in a probably related comment: ever notice that the very first thing we are expected to do when we arrive at Dev Serv. is to take a number and wait? That's very bad P.R. You ought to think of a better way to begin the intake and inquiry processes. The current way is very much like waiting at the dentist's office for a root canal.

Having to purchase a permit for a Historical area in person is an inconvenience.

Honorable Mayor Hardberger, Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion. I own a sign company located in Richardson TX, that does extensive work throughout the U.S. We deal with municipalities on a daily basis, and I have never encountered a city as hard to deal with as San Antonio. I also sit on the Building Code Board of Appeals for the city of Arlington, so I request that my opinions be viewed from that perspective. I hope this will assist in making things smoother, as I love to visit San Antonio, and know that there is a lot of growth in your future. Thank You, **[name, company name, and phone number removed]**

Hours waiting to submit plans for review. Out of date tree forms are supplied at front desk. It takes months of waiting to be issued a street address on new plats. etc. In a word, "painful".

how can we speed up the process of getting permits and getting platting done

I also came in to resolve some CPS issues. Less than satisfactory performance in this area.

I am an electrical contractor with a state license. On my first visit the permit clerk gave me the wrong information and the wrong form. I was trying to get a City of SA license. On my second trip things went much better. I was able to secure the necessary permits. When we were trying to get temporary power for the project we had more problems. It seems that the permit staff does not all of the rules. Everything took twice as long as it should. But we were able to get the projects completed. The electrical inspectors seem to have trouble communicating with contractors. That is another can of worms. Remember you asked me.

I am still waiting for my plat to be approved. This process was started in May of 2005. We are still waiting. The services of S.M. Galindo Engineers was used because of the experiences I had several years ago regarding re-zoning and replatting of parcels. It is apparent the system is lacking in efficiency due to the right hand not know what the left had is doing. The passing of plats from one dept to the next and the time wasted is unbelievable. After reading the stories in the Express News regarding the grandfathering

and loopholes used in the developing of new areas for housing, I can see how the system regards all platting requests. I am seeking to have a small parcel platted for the building of affordable housing on the southside. This is taking way too long for a mere eleven lot plat.

I applied for building permits all over the country and San Antonio has to be one of the slowest. Things seem to be improving as of lately.

I applied for what was called a 20 day permit. That meant the approval process should take 20 days. What it really meant was on the 20th day they would reject your application and give you a list of things to correct. Not necessarily all inclusive. We would resubmit and start the 20 days over. Another rejection for another reason and another 20 days. Ended up doing this three times. All reasons were obscure. We were building an empty lease space building and we had a general storage room on each floor. The fire division rejected our application until we could provide information about what would be stored, on what kind of racks, how high, how far from the ceiling, etc... We don't know who will even be leasing the building at this point. This is in a 10x12 room on a 20,000 square foot floor. I just thought it was ridiculous.

I brought a plan for a single family residence as I requested expedited service with me authorizing to pay over time charges. but the plan got stuck in-between to bureaucrats for 4 weeks. I came to see the plan checker got to a number and set in the waiting room for 2 hours, after waiting for all this time I was notified the man was busy and cannot see me today . the whole time sitting in the waiting room I could see the plan checker talking to other workers , joking with them and basically not doing very much. when the Clark informed me that Mr. Jim Clark could not see me today I almost run to the door in order not to explode in the office. I turned the matter to the designer who drew the plans And he had a hard time getting any information from the Plan checker. after losing my temper I got an appointment and the plan was released . but one month was lost and my contract with the customer has not been extended .

I can't believe that it takes 30 days to receive a permit. There is obviously not enough people to do the work. I know there is 1 person who reviews plans and I think she needs help. Just think 1 person for the entire city of San Antonio. That is ridiculous.

I did not conduct this business in person, but by phone and then had a National Guard person visit your office to get his certificate of occupancy. The process was difficult at best.

I did not encounter a problem with the permit request in person. However, every year we have probably getting Development Svcs to update our lic information, i.e. bond renewal, lic renewal, etc. I am disappointed to say that this is the 4th year in a row where it took more than 2 attempts to correct this issue. This year we mailed the information certified mail 1 1/2 months in advance. However, nothing was updated in the records. I had to personally take copies of the information to DS in person. Upon my second visit to pull a permit, I was told once again that everything expired; which is absurd since 3 weeks earlier I delivered the information in hand myself. Additionally, it is my

understanding that several contractors encounter this similar situation. Thank You for caring about DS!

I do not believe that the purpose that the one stop was created for is being fulfilled. The permitting process in San Antonio is still very slow and very tedious. It drives business away from our city, and the regulations and difficulties make it much harder for us as contractors to perform our services. I am building for several clients currently, in other cities, because they had heard about all the challenges that surround pulling permits in San Antonio, and they chose to buy land in other cities prior to our interactions with them. Difficulty with permitting is a real problem both for city revenue and for businesses attempting to thrive here.

I DON'T OFTEN BUILD IN THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO, SO EACH TIME I DO, IT IS A WHOLE NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCE. IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF THERE WERE A SINGLE DOCUMENT, WHICH COULD BE UPDATED OVER TIME, THAT WOULD ITEMIZE ALL THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A SINGLE FAMILY CONSTRUCTION PERMIT, DETAILS OF REQUIRED INSPECTIONS, AND DETAILS OF ALL REQUIREMENTS TO GET A FINAL RELEASE TO CPS TO GET A GAS METER. SURROUNDING SMALLER CITIES HAVE THIS, AND WHILE YOURS WOULD BE A LITTLE MORE INVOLVED, IT IS NOT AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK TO DEVELOP ONE.

I feel the city needs more employee's to handle the volume. At times I can wait up to an hour to see someone.

I frequent the City of San Antonio as a permit expeditor. It seems that there is always a shortage of intake personnel. In order to speed up the intake process, I recommend increasing the intake staff. Thank you, **[name, title, company, email, and phone number removed]**

I had never had to apply for construction with the City prior to this experience, however, I have dealt with Bexar County for permits and the entire experience with the City was a nightmare. I think the City had no desire to be helpful in the permitting process whatsoever. They directed me to the website and internet services for information on the process and requirements, instead of giving me an overview of what to expect and how the system works. They gave me the impression that I should know this information and if not, look for it myself. I understand how busy they all are, but when you pay the kind of fees required for building, etc. you would think they could be a little more helpful or at least more pleasant to deal with, since we have no choice but to deal with these employees. I don't like leaving with the feeling that they were bothered by my presence, etc. I don't know if it was because the construction was in a newly pre-annexed area (Timberwood Park) and they did not know the answers to my questions, or they just wanted to watch me go in circles and return 15 times before I had everything turned in properly. I have dealt with Bexar County as a custom builder for years and have never gotten that kind of service or response. I think that should be more informative and facilitate the process. I am seriously reevaluating whether or not I want to continue another home in Timberwood Park, or else just move a little further out 281 into one of

the other custom neighborhoods available. I think there is a lot of room for improvement in the process.

I had to get back in line three times due to misleading information that was given to me. Then had to sit for 20 minutes while I watched them take a break. In all my time there to do 5 minutes took over 1.5 hrs. And other than the lady that greeted me and the cashier there was no customer care service provided.

I had to leave 3 to 4 messages for Rudy Cantu before he would return my calls. On 9/15 a set of revisions were received by R. Lopez and lost for 5 days causing an unnecessary delay. I also STRONGLY disagree with the \$500 surcharge for applications submitted via mail or FedEx. This will force owners/tenants to either spend thousands of \$ sending someone there or they will have to wait until they hire a GC who will then be forced to try and rush the plans through the review process.

I have a large list of problems we encountered during our process of building our new home. Problems related to replating, permits, inspection nightmares, customer service attitudes, etc.. Bottom line: The City of San Antonio development and inspections has been the worst part of our owner-builder process. The lack of cohesive information and knowledge is mind-numbing! Required excessive amount of time just to accomplish the simplest of tasks.

I have been in General Contracting and Architecture for 20 years and have seen little improvement in the process in San Antonio. I worked in Austin for 10 years and the problem in Austin is that it is stringent, but you know what the rules are 100% of the time and as long as you adhere to the rules you will get your permit timely. In San Antonio, the rules always change from one person or department to another. If you have some time I can share numerous cases where I have gotten approval from one person, but not from another. Please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

I have been to the Alamo St. facility many times, once to procure a permit for my own home and many times to secure fire reports related to my job as insurance adjuster. I frequently see people who seem to be waiting more for permits than for any other service. I think there should be more "cubicles" attending to the people who need permits than anything else.

I have been trying for over a year to receive a permit to build a Public-Private partnership project. Everytime I think we have the approvals a "new" person / department has additional questions / comments to address. This process has had a very negative impact on my partner / investor, and I will not be inclined to do this type of project in the City of SA again. Very disappointed.

I have had two major problems during the permit process. Both have to do with not the initial submittal of the drawings but the resubmittal. I think the system that is in place to resubmit is flawed. You make changes and then just bring the changed drawings back up to the front desk and they take them in for adding to the original set. I have two situations where one set (3022 Thousand Oaks) was accidentally added to another project and it took

over two weeks to find them and remove them and place on my drawings. The second set was just misplaced, and after a week I had to go down and sit with them until they found them with one of the plan reviewers. They were never added to the permit set and were just sitting on someone's desk.

I hope there can be a process to expedite the permit process. It took me 8 months to secure a Building Permit when in years past it used to take about 2 months. However I know Mr. Florencio Pena is working on ways to improve the Department, I applaud the Mayor and his staff for taking on this issue to assist in correcting the bottlenecks. It may be as simple as increasing the Departmental budget to increase Plan checker Staffing.

I needed an electrical inspection for a pylon sign at a shopping center to get the sign lit up after Albertsons had gone. The sign was on a separate meter, but Albertsons was paying the electric bill. When trying to get it turned over into my company's name, they wanted to perform an electrical inspection of the vacant Albertsons! I had to fly to San Antonio to come to the one-stop and explain. I was there for over an hour. No one knew how to help me. I had to leave to catch a plane, and they told me that I would have to come back! That was very expensive. They couldn't find my property on the GPS deal, I waited forever, and they did not know how to help me. They were not friendly and would not give me a business card so I could take care of this over the phone.

I never got a definitive answer regarding required items needed for my permit submittal. In particular, I questioned the requirement for copy of the recorded plat as part of the submittal. One gentleman said it was not required because it was a "Parking Lot" project. Another gentleman said it was required because there was Landscaping, which is part of most all projects. One project site does not have a recorded plat, due to its location in the inner part of the city and the lots have not changed over time. In short, there was a lot of confusion with my questions that never got answered. There should be someone there that is an expert that other staff could go to for answers, or someone who can find the answer.

I never got to the construction permitting stage, as my project has not made it out of the historic review stage. The experience has been horrible. The review board has no concept of what we, as home owners have gone through to restore a historic home. They do not try to work with us or understand our opinions. They just, basically, get in the way and force us to just give up or break the rules to get our projects accomplished. If I were mayor I would abolish this board. Thank you for the opportunity to state my opinion.

I really have no complaints other than the Central Records and CPS need to communicate in an efficient way. Records is often losing my slab letters so I have to drive back down to give them a copy with the City's stamp on it. I think Poloskey and his people have a better handle on things now.

I recently submitted a building setback line replat. Even though this was a relatively new platting procedure, I had the impression that city staff did not understand the review and processing procedure for this type of plat. I asked for information upfront regarding submittal requirements, only to have the reviewers later disregard the written guidelines

they sent to my office. I was still receiving requests for revisions even after I had the Development Services LOC and had submitted mylar plat copies for the approval completeness review. I did not find this "streamlined" platting any easier than other platting applications; there was much confusion and extra work (needlessly) placed upon the consulting engineer filing the plat application. On a positive note, city staff did process the replat in a timely, albeit cumbersome, manner (only two weeks) and worked diligently to put the plat on the planning commission agenda despite the difficulties associated with the submittal requirements. My main complaint with this particular plat review process is that it is hard to understand what the City wants in order to grant approval of the plat request. Sometimes it seems as if the staff itself is also unsure of what the City requirements are as well. Perhaps it was due to the newness of the building setback line replat procedure, or more likely, can be attributed to the ever increasingly complex and burdensome regulations generally associated with the City's platting process.

I repeatedly have TOPS electric meters held up or denied because the blumbing inspectors only provide partial approval on Top-Out due to master bath jaccussi tub not being installed at time of top-out. These tubs are a trim out item and are not installed until after the granite/marble/tile/etc platform is installed. Also tubs of this cost are installed at trim out to protect them from damage and theft. The "partial" inspection at top-out stops the TOPS release to CPS needlessly and causes undue delay and frustration on everyone's part. Also, historically (and it is not any better now) engineers' letters for slab and frame are consistently lost when they are mailed in by the individual engineers. I have followed up to assure that the letters have proper address and permit number identifications. But without fail, 7 out of 10 letters are "never received" (or registered as received) by the engineering dept. They are only registered as received when replacement originals are hand delivered and personally witnessed as being received and stamped by the staff. That is why the standard process when you hand deliver a letter is for the staff to stamp it received and then hand a photo copy to serve as proof of receipt. If most of the letters received by mail actually got received and logged into the system, this entire hand delivery and hand receipt process would not be necessary. It is not uncommon for a single individual to stand at the window in order to deliver engineer letters for 5-10 minutes before being greeted. Thus all while staff are wandering around behind the desk. One feels invisible.

I spent over 4 hours each time I had to go there. I also have received tremendous grief with regards to laying a parking lot at my new office. The office is located on Zarzamora, a part of town you would think the city would be happy to see new businesses enter and start cleaning up - but to the contrary, the Public Works Dept ran me in circles. The end result, I have an abandoned alleyway running along side my property that encourages drug users and prostitutes to use. Forgive me for being candid, but not a week goes by that I don't have to clean up human feces from the alleyway. It is a shame the city would not allow me to secure and clean this area up, therefore deterring these criminals. Instead, I was told the alleyway was there for the public's use - I don't think what it's being used for is healthy for our city. **[name, company, and number removed]**

I started at a satellite office (Valley View) and they made me go downtown... frustrating. I was seeking a remodeling permit for a two storey home. It was an addition to an existing 2nd storey.

I submit all plans for "After Hours" review and pay for this service. I am supposed to have response within 5 days. Many times I am not notified of a problem and I have to check up on them. Many times it takes several days for the review person to return my phone call, therefore delaying the approval of my plans. Also, the city needs to fix the speaker at the cashiers station.

I think the front intake counter for commercial projects is understaffed. If the one intake personnel goes on lunch a reviewer or manager has to do intake removing them from their critical tasks. In addition, if the intake person is with a customer then generally it takes a while and the line tends to grow.

I think there needs to be better communication between departments.

I think You shall have a trade persons adequately trained for the permits execution, the persons attending at counter did not understand the permits what they mean and they had to bring some one else to help the meaning of the questions you have, I have many Cities I visit and San Antonio Has not yet evaluated a simple common permit Application which make it difficult to execute. The permits need to be self oriented so We do not make questions over the permits and the person of the counter do not have to ask questions ahead. I hope you get a permit on your hands and do not ask how to fill the application and you'll see that is a little bit hard to understand. I am a Electrical contractor and it is Difficult even for me to do a simple application. Other than what you had asked the City of San Antonio is very nice people all around Thanks for ask this questions **[name removed]**

I think your online service for permits, etc. should be more user-friendly. I have had experiences where I looked up information online (i.e. to see if a building was cleared for occupancy) only to arrive at development services and staff there would find different information than I found.

I took a number and waited for it to come up. The receptionist went over to other people and told them that they could go before us because we sat on the "wrong" side. There are no signs telling you that you MUST sit on a specific side or you will not receive service. The side we were "supposed" to sit on was full and the other side was empty. You can see the signs that flash your number from either side so it did not seem to be any difference. By the way we have been there numerous times and have sat on both sides and have never had a problem. When our number flashed we got up and went to the desk where we were supposed to go. Of course I am a woman and don't tend to flirt with her so I guess that leaves me at a disadvantage when it comes to receiving services.

I was in supervisory role with the City several years ago. My area was within the DS Engineering division. During that time, Terry B. divided the existing drainage personnel into Storm Water Engineering and Development Services Engineering. Basically, Terry

created to Letter of Certifying sections/departments which instead of 1 drainage review, there are now 2 different drainage reviews. This increases the process dramatically due to further disconnect between the two reviewing departments. This is just one of many overlapping reviews that I see on a daily basis. I have a lot of suggestions and recommendations to increase development services review times and job knowledge/training. Currently, a lot of City staffers are not trained adequately to do their jobs and are seriously lacking in job knowledge. This problem can be addressed but must first be identified. I believe that due to the different staff levels, the lack of job knowledge has not been adequately identified to the City Manager and Mayor's office.

I was there on behalf of my neighborhood. There is no way to stop demolition of a viable structure except through Historic designation. Whole neighborhoods can be destroyed one house at a time.

I was very difficult to get a permit on the townhomes we are building. After a year of submitting the same buildings over and over they made us stop and redraw the plans because they were no longer acceptable, it took over 3 months to get a permit and we lost sales.

I would like the city to provide a short check list of the permits for construction of a house. For example the check list shall state that you need four plumbing inspectors. 1)roughen 2)Underground waterline 3)Top out 4)Final without going to the detail. This check list shall be given to the customer with these items highlighted. The detail can be given to the customers separately so they can refer to it as needed. Finally if there is minor fixes that can be corrected on spot, the inspectors need to wait at the job for the repair up to 30 minutes in place having to go back again.

I would prefer a better conduit to the people working the plans inspection and permit approval. I wasn't able to contact people to learn what additional information was necessary. The two folks at the counter cannot be marked high enough. They were awesome!

If you could streamline the process, it would make things a lot easier to permit in your city. Sometimes there are conflicts or discrepancies in what different want to see on their drawings. I could speak better to this if you like to call me. my work is number **[number removed]**

I'm a regular at the development office and each time a permit is sought, the process and or requirements are different....it's a constant guessing game for simple finish out permits. Also, a big problem is the approval of plans at the development office only to have a field inspector disallow the very items that have been previously approved i.e., wall design related to fire codes, etc. It is VERY costly to build it as approved to only have a field inspector tell you otherwise and tell you it must be done their way or the inspection will not be passed!

In order to obtain a C of O I had to remain in my car in the dead of winter in order to wait for seven separate City Inspectors to arrive . This entire ordeal took over 2 full 8 hour

days. To me this is unacceptable and there must be another method to this. I'm not looking forward to another CofO in the near future. Thank you.

In our particular experience we were hired as GC to do an office finish-out in a building (shell) that was constructed by a different GC. Obtaining our permit for the work we were contracted to do ended up being a long drawn out process. We provided the necessary documentation for the work we were contracted to do, but had to have included in our documentation information regarding the work that was done by the GC's that had built the shell. To obtain all of the necessary information we ended up having to go to the original architects and GC for the required IECC Compliance Letters. I may be wrong in thinking this, but it seemed to me that all of this documentation should have been requested from the GC when the building shell was permitted, inspected, etc. and therefore should already be on file for the building. I would think that we as GC for an office finish-out in a shell building would only have to be responsible for providing documentation regarding anything we are constructing within the building and any changes (i.e.: roof penetrations) that we are making to the existing structure. I did not feel that it was reasonable to require us to provide documentation regarding insulation in the existing roof deck.

In person the staff is fine. It is very frustrating to try call the one stop -- you can never get through to a person.

In reference to fire alarm permitting and inspection services. The city has a very slow turn around time with only one person in the plan review dept. it slows thing up. I have that the city of Austin has three full time people in fire alarm plan review. note that the people in fire prevention are all pretty good to work with.

I strongly believe that your problems are not in the initial permitting process, but in the follow through provided by the "teams". I found getting answers to phone calls to be unexistent and returned phone calls to voice mail messages taking close to 48 hours to be returned. I found that a simple permit that should have taken no more than two weeks to receive, took nearly 8. It finally took the owner of the facility to call the head of development service for an answer as to what was taking so long. I understand that SA is undergoing growing pains. SA is growing too fast to keep up with. This poses a definite problem. Either the city needs to hire more, qualified reviews and inspectors, or limit the number or applications that are taken during a particular time frame. I am generally satisfied with the whole process, I just feel it could definitely be more efficient. Thank you for taking the time to focus on this issue. I believe it is important for the growth and development of this fine city, and its surrounding areas

In trying to secure a sign permit, I was sent from one floor to another. Each person at the counter was unsure of what process was supposed to be happening. It was very frustrating to the run-around I received. All documentation was provided as necessary but no one seemed to know which department was supposed to handle what. Totally disorganized and miss-informed. There were a couple of young ladies who tried to be very helpful. All they could do was send me from one floor to another in hopes of trying to assist me. There should be an easier process than is currently in place. For as much as

the taxpayers paid into the expensive software program that was supposed to make securing a permit much simpler, it seems highly complicated.

Information is typically given to you in fragments, which will necessitate several trips to the City offices.

Information received and relied on prior to appearing in person regarding the permitting process was inaccurate and caused severe delays in the process of completing our scope of work on site therefore interrupting the timeline for other contractors, etc.

Inspection process on the job site could be a little quicker. Most cities around the SA area get it done in a 24 hour turn around.

Interacting with the personnel in order to get a Fire Alarm Installation Permit is generally a very professional experience. When it comes to receiving the actual permit, I have sometimes had to wait in excess of eight weeks. Some projects will complete by this time and that put us in a bad position. It is against the rules to install equipment without the permit and I have lost work because of this and because my competitors have chosen to install systems without waiting for the permit. In my opinion it is a manpower problem and there needs to be additional personnel to review the plans in order to issue the permits in a more timely fashion.

it appears that the delays are caused by fire plan reviewers they do not have adequate staff to do reviews it appears they have too many managers.

It is NOT the application experience that needs rating or review. It is the frustrating time that it takes to get a building permit issued. Permit applications will languish in fire, plumbing, electrical, traffic, etc. Woe be to your application if the reviewer is ill or on vacation. We have an attractive one-stop building that needs more personnel in all departments that provide plan review services.

It is pleasant experience if you are a regular visitor to Development Services otherwise it is fairly confusing and difficult to get things done.

It is ridiculous that a working person has to take a half day off from work to get a permit to put up an above ground pool.

IT MIGHT BE GOOD TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE GENERAL BUILDING PERMIT INTAKE PERSON ABLE TO TAKE PLANS INTO THE SYSTEM. THE WAIT WAS A LITTLE LONG.

It seems that regulations are changing and different people give you different answers. Also it seems the city is threatening developers as to vested rights.

IT TAKES AT LEAST 3 TRIPS OF AGGRAVATION TO GET WHAT THE CITY IS ASKING FOR. THEY DO NOT GIVE ALL THE INFORMATION. I BUILD FAST FOOD RESTURANTS AND THE CORPORATION I DEAL WITH CAN NOT

UNDERSTAND WHY THE CITY TAKE SO LONG TO GET A PERMIT. (CITY BUREAUCRACY)

It takes so long to get a permit. a system is needed that would speed up the permit process.

it takes to long to get construction permit would you please help us. we try to get permit for six months now. please HELP!!! Thank you very much Von Inthavong

It takes to long waiting for service. My average time spent waiting is over one hour.

It takes too long - My average wait time is over 45 minutes - to get in front of a city clerk no matter how simple or complicated the matter is.

It takes too long for plan reviews to start once plans are submitted and too long once the review process starts

It takes too long to get a building permit.

It takes too long to get to the counter. One reason is the department can't keep it staffed with enough people. The last few times, there was only one person for intake and that was iether Alicia or Rudy (the supervisor).

It takes up to an hour or more to be able to submit plans for plan review for permitting. As a professional, this costs us an extreme amount of money. There is no reason why we should have to sit that long to turn in a set of plans that takes 5 minutes. Call me anytime to discuss: **[name and number removed]**

It takes way to long. I usually have to plan on wasting a few hours. You get the run around and too many different opinions on what is actually needed to get something done. It is a small miracle if you can actually leave there accomplishing what you set out to do.

It would be nice to get frie alarm permits quicker.

It's no so much the process of applying for a permit as it is the correspondance and time frame in which the projects are reviewed that needd to be streamlined.

I've been involved with several projects where the city needed to review and in turn I needed to respond. The time it took was absurd, over 6 months just to get to a point where we knew there was going to be some sort of issuance of permit. The drainage took the longest to process in that the Development Services reviewed and then sent to storm water. Because of the delay the General Contractor had to increase his bid. The owner could have had the project well underway and thus supporting the community by giving jobs (and future jobs). I can understand some sort of delay but not when it is this long and costing the client more money. Another point the city needs to be aware of is the sometimes ludacris requirement of the tree ordinance. Again, my client had to pay and jump through hoops just because the ordinance said he had to save a pocket of junk

trees/shrubs that had no value to the property or surrounding site. The City needs to understand that maybe in grey area projects, the review should be automatic on a case by case basis. My client had to endure a tremendous amount of time and money just to get it resolved and ultimately, the city approving the removal of the trees. Time is money.

I've been waiting a year to share this so here goes: I have been in the sign and advertising business for 30 years. The City of San Antonio DOES NOT have a comprehensive plan to inform (probably a wide range of trades) as to various overlay and historical districts that affect our livelihood. Once I have submitted a sign permit; with a design (money already spent and after I have done my preliminary design work based on the city "sign map" in our office)) the permit office researches the property and tells me what is viable and what isn't. That is when I get the "surprise" of which district I'm in. There must be 100's of these " Historical and Overlay Districts" that exist and I; the Licensed Permit Puller; know nothing about them or what the restrictions are in them until I submit the permit. Best Example: I have a customer at 400 South Flores in the "River OverLay District" about a 1/2 mile from the downtown One-Stop Center. That District is sooooooo restricted, he can barely use the 1 existing sign he has out front, let alone put any advertising on HIS BUILDING. The total irony of the situation is that the building was a downtown garage and he has invested tens of thousands of dollars refurbishing the building to make it back into a DOWNTOWN GARAGE only to find out that he can only have a cumulative sign square footage for the pole sign AND THE BUILDING of 150 sq. ft. on a 5 Bay Garage with a showroom and offices. I have seen buildings all around town with more than 150 sq. ft. of Graffiti on them. It is ridiculous with the amount of time will I have to invest with the city, to make this work? Sure the architects can charge for all the time they spend with "historical" but our customers won't pay \$ 150.00+ per hr. for me to "shepherd & navigate these jobs through the system. I CAN'T spend "weeks" pursuing 1 sign, it is a waste of time and MONEY. Sure we need the rules but they are becoming counterproductive. The regulations are necessary; like on the Riverwalk BUT it probably costs hundreds of dollars just to get ANY sign approved for the Riverwalk and that is just "to do business" on the Riverwalk not the cost of the sign which I believe will be a maximum of 9 sq. ft. Thank you for your time, I look forward to hearing from you. **[name and company name removed]**

just to make sure there is accuracy on the information that is entered and to the correct customer database

lots of waiting with no idea of what is going on during that wait

Mayor, I hope you read this. We start a project back in February of 2005, the portable building was ready in May of 2005, we found out that we needed permits from the city to get this portable building set on our large empty lot. So we started in March 2005 and not until this month October 2005 did we finally get the permits completed and given the go ahead from all you the city's little kings. It was ridiculous the most ignorant details that we had to go through. If one of those city's little kings would of gotten off their royal "kiss my ass" butts, and just gone over to the site, cleared the paper work, we would of been in our portable building, that is for the Sunday school children, by now. You have to many kingdom building people, you need more "I work for the citizens of this city"

people, and go out of their way to make it easier for the citizenry to do business. Thank you for this opportunity.

Mayor: This project involved construction of a new single family residence on a newly platted 5 acre tract of land. The issues were more related to the platting and detention than construction permitting, but your survey didn't allow more than one block to be marked. The drainage department wanted a detention pond to support full impervious cover of the 5 acres even though the residence was being built on one small corner of the property. In my view your staff was totally unreasonable in their assessment of the requirements. They intimated we were lying when we said there were no future development plans at this time. I hesitate to identify the project by name because we only have a conditional permit pending approval of the modified plat. Also we do lots of business with the City and are fearful of retribution on future jobs. Nevertheless, you can't fix the problem if you can't identify it, so the **permit number is XXXXXXXX**, Franciscan Friars Subdivision/ OFM Residence. To satisfy your staff, we ended up agreeing to build a detention pond to catch the runoff created by this residence. It is a 1 to 2 foot berm, channeled to an overflow drain. We modified the plat to include a "temporary no build zone" on the rest of the property pending replatting of the property. The developed area is less than 1/2 acre out of the 5 acres. The construction is at the upper most corner in elevation, with the entire remaining land available for absorption of runoff. By all engineering calculations, the undeveloped 4-1/2 acres is more than sufficient to absorb the runoff created by the impervious cover. Some of your staff even agreed with the civil engineer's position on this issue. If the Friars ever wanted to subdivide the land and sell off part of it to other homeowners, it would have to be replatted anyway. At that time the City would be able to look at the drainage impact of the proposed development. I think senior management made a mistake in judgement, then just didn't want to admit their mistake when confronted by the civil engineer and the architect. Our Client lost valuable building time and suffered increased material cost because of the delays and the unfortunate timing of the hurricanes which have driven material costs sky high. We suffered the loss of our time with much aggravation. On the positive side, we can say this is the first really bad experience we've had with your staff in trying to resolve an issue. Your staff is usually cooperative on resolving issues that arise. We have another beef and that is vested rights. The Express News expose on vested rights is showing the worst of the worst in developers that are stripping land for development. Most responsible design professionals want to save as many quality trees as possible. What may not be clear to you is that the tree ordinance is too oppressive and the mediation costs are too high. To avoid the hassle and expense of dealing with the City, developers are seeking land with vested rights and stripping it of all trees and then starting over on landscape. If the ordinance was reasonable, more - and I believe most - developers would be more willing to work around the trees. The tree ordinance has created the adversarial position and in our view is largely responsible for the devastation of land - the very thing it sought to prevent. Things to improve: Trees are in the save list that should not be there. The ordinance defines safe distances around trees that are unreasonable. Many trees will survive just fine with a less restrictive no-construction zone. There are examples all over town. A tree with an island in front of it and the back half of the root zone in undisturbed soil will have no problem living. But per the tree ordinance it has to be calculated as if it will die or was removed. So the owner pays for

trees even though they save them. Why not set up an escrow fund for those trees. If 1 year after construction, the tree is still living and healthy, refund the mediation money for that tree. If the tree looks stressed, hold the escrow for a second year to determine if mediation is required. If the tree does die, then either take the money - which seems to be the real City motivation - or let the Owner plant the replacement trees and get his escrow back. The prevailing impression is that the ordinance is more about raising revenue than about saving trees. It hurts the small projects the most. We have a poor church that wants to build a new sanctuary (Faith Lutheran Church on Jones Maltzberger). They have some old growth oak trees on their lot. We will lose a couple of trees with the expansion, but saved most of them. We had to expand the parking lot and put in turn lanes for the fire trucks to meet city code. The proposed parking lot is surrounded and shaded by beautiful trees. The way the loss is calculated, we may as well knock out all the trees surrounding the parking area. The added cost to the project to pay for the "calculated loss" of trees has stopped the church from expanding. If they were paying for actual loss, they could move on. Their application for vested rights was denied. That is not our area of expertise, but the civil and landscape architect are in agreement they should have been vested. They are too poor to fight it in court, so they lose. Now with all the delay regarding vested rights, special inspections has kicked in adding even more cost to the project. Ask me in a year how I feel about special inspections and I'll tell you after we see how that shakes out. The problem with all large bureaucracies is that everyone is afraid to make a decision based on common sense. Somehow, common sense needs to re-enter the equation. These comments reflect my own personal opinions and are not necessarily the opinions of our firm or the principals thereof (i.e. please don't blacklist us because I gave you this perspective). Good luck on your quest to make things better. **[name, company and number removed]**

Me and my group developing few projects in San Antonio and we are getting bad experience. I would like to meet personally to Mr. Mayor and go over the procedure of plan reviewing process which is not systematic to professional developer. Thanks **[name removed]**.

Molasses flows faster in January

most of the inspectors were okay at the job site in regards to bldg, plumbing, electric, hvac. cpse caused serious delays to my schedule and undue cost for my developer. cpsg was very responsive. sbc is a very poorly ran business they caused major delays for the project. saws is very unorganized and they caused many delays for the project. water meter department is still causing me undue cost in trying to get meters turned over to the owner. alan rush/rudy salazar in traffic is causing delays in getting a c of o. we are intending to start another project in town on 281 outside of 1604. this will be a very large project and i hope it goes better. thank you for asking

Most recent event was a typical permit resubmittal based on dept. comments. Project **AP#XXXXXXX** was resubmitted on 9-26-05 and was not logged into the system until 10-10-05 after e-mail requests to Fernando De Leon. Building and Fire remain pending since 10-11-05. **AP#XXXXXXX** was resubmitted with timely reviews by all departments with the exception of Fire, where it remains pending since 10-12-05. We have denials

from other departments and another resubmittal is required pending the Fire review. It becomes an endless process with no apparent time parameters placed on the city staff. Thank you

Mostly I would like to see the review process streamlined. I'm not sure how to accomplish this, but permits need to be faster to obtain in order to satisfy our customers.

Mr. Mayor-- not sure if you will ever get this but one stop really means one stop-- things take forever to get a building permit these days.. I have been doing this for 22 years in this city. It is a shame this has to be...

Much improved over previous years. I would like to see a quicker response to online permit requests. If this had happen on my nlast visit I would not have had to make a trip to valley view.

My biggest complaint is the subjectivity in the whole historic review process. In 2003 I went though Historic Preservation Tax Credit process, and while I found the staff of HDRC extremely supportive and helpful, my issue is with the actual review board. Who are these people, what are there credentials and what makes them the authority on appropriateness? I found their condescending demeanor offensive. FYI, my project was approved but I found the process to be a big fat waste of taxpayer time & money. Why not hire qualified (ie architects) individuals on the HRDC staff expedite the process. My other complaint out of this experiance is the Building inspection process.....The system is clearly geared toward the new contruction / tradesmen. As a homeowner and GC of my rehab and home addition project, I found the process challenging. If these guys are not going to work by appointment then they need to be accessable. Everyone of the inspectors voice mail was full.....I had to hunt them down through the cheif inspectors office to schedule a time to meet them at the property for inspections, and half the time they were late.

My Company is new to the San Antonio market, therefore, I am somewhat "blind" as to the city's permitting process. The information I have received seems bias toward someone who may be generally familiar with the City process. A very clear Step-by-Step guide would be a great help.("Permitting for Dummies" is what I need)

My general concern is involves the code issues and staff knowledge AND agreement of interpretation of codes. Some of the code requirements for commercial renovation are causing us to loose deals over issues like the cost of retrofitting all light fixtures even if there are minor changes. Another example would be the requirement to retrofit Air Conditioning ducts even with minor changes to vents. Antother one: Requirement to change out all the storefront glass to insulated glass if any work at all is done to entries. The cost of these types of retrofits make leasing of existing space difficult to compete with rates.

My husband and I were seeking a building permit, which included MEP for a remodel of a exhisiting building. We were very dis-satisfied with how long this process took... we even paid for the process to expedite. My husband phoned the city many time and found

that plans had sat on one inspector's desks for a week! When he became firm in inquiring about the reasoning for this, all of a sudden, the process began. He knew this by checking the date and time of start up online. We are also unhappy with the denial process. Simple questions that can be answered or ensured prior to C of O, were denied, which held up the renovation process. It's unbelievable and sad at the same time that we have people of this type governing our business development in the city.

My issue relates to lack of response to voice-mail messages for questions or regarding the status of submitted plans for review. Also, if faxed submittals are lacking additional forms, there is no return notice providing or advising help of any kind to complete the "package" and no one knows happened to the original forms. This occurred twice!

My only suggestion relates to the way building codes are interpreted. There are too many things that are not documented, so that a designer of a building can see what "all the rules" are before a set of plans are turned in for review. Staff needs to develop a truly COMPLETE set of interpretations and rules relating to items in the code that are administered in a way that can't be readily inferred from the code language nor the City amendments. Everything should be in writing, clearly indexed to the code, and available on the website. The website needs to be kept up to date. For many months after the last set of codes was adopted, older versions of the code were listed on the website as being what the City followed.

My project was to raise the level of the driveway under the Port cachet at my church 4" to be even with the sidewalk to eliminate a trip hazard. It took four trips downtown to get the permit. One of the trips was to take pictures of the existing driveway to prove to the tree person there were no trees growing in the existing concrete driveway. I feel there should be a better method to inform people exactly what they need on their first visit. It seems every time I returned I saw someone different and they told me I needed something else.

Need better help on permits, when there is already a building permit the electrical permit should easy the receive

Need more cashiers!

NEED MORE FRONT DESK PERSONNEL NEED MORE PERSONNEL TO GET AP NUMBERS OUT FASTER

Need more representatives available during peak hours/days.

need more staff

need to be able to fax permit application so it can be processed prior to being picked up

Need to improve the payment process.

NEW REQUIREMENTS REQUIRED BY DIFFERENT PEOPLE. ALL EXISTING AND NEW REQUIREMENTS NEED TO BE IN WRITING.

No information was given what about can or can not be done when a home owner is remodeling a doing an addition to a house.

Not getting complete and correct answers to question. Getting different answers to the same questions from different people

On a 10 day turn around for a permit to build a pool in a strip center it is now 45 days and I still do not have a permit they are all confused down their.

On a recent rush job we paid for overtime (expedited) plan review. They lost escrow coversheet requesting overtime review service and held up our permitting by over two weeks (We had to resubmit escrow form again). Also, it seems as though the only way to get plans reviewed in a resonable amount of time is to pay the overtime fees. More staff is required.

One of the problems both in the zoning and permitting process is that there is no consistency in zoning recommendations or in the requirements of what is required or not required on building plan submittals. Staff is indecisive of what is required. Higher ups do not have a common sense approach to certain situations, they do not listen to issues raised by their staff, it is my way only attitude (Planning and Development Services). The common first time client is overwhelmed by the city's stringent requirements. The UDC is not user friendly it is complicated. The average citizen is told that in order to use your property for a neighborhood store, first you have to rezone and request a plan amendment (Planning), paid large fees with no guarantees. Plus comply with development requirement he doesn't understand due to the text of the UDC. It is not a easy document to read or use. City staff at times is unsure on the meaning of the text of the UDC. The Planning Department, plan amendment process becomes a conflict in that staff will not support changes to an approved community plan even though the applicant has support from the neighborhood association, who created the plan. Once a plan is adopted it is set in concrete mentality. Both department should be reviewed along with the UDC. The zoning conversion in 2002 created numerous. Individual zoning right were lost due to the new zonings prohibiting uses enjoyed in the previous zoning. Time and money is lost when individual are told that the only recourse is to go thru a change in zoning process.

One Stop (Development Services) has improved in the last several years. *****SAWS is the agency that needs to be improved- specifically their permitting and inspections for sewer & water services for commercial development. My experience with SAWS has been very difficult at best. SAWS has no accountability and no way of truly tracking a project from submission for permit through inspections and final acceptance. *****I would be glad to give more information on this. I hope this is not just a make you feel like you have input survey? **[name and number removed]**

One stop center = city staffers are further removed from public than before....what used to take a minute now takes hours.....one stop = one stop but you might be there for days

One thing that I and other feel would be of great service is a time frame when an inspector will show up. For example- If I am asking for an inspection for a residential or

commercial location and the location is locked, this would require a person to meet the inspector to unlock the location. It would be beneficial to have knowledge of a time frame the inspector would arrive. They state that they cannot give a time frame but maybe they can say morning or afternoon. That would REALLY help. Thanks for your concern!! Al Ramirez I understand that they are busy and some inspections take longer than others. If there was a way to say morning or afternoon, that would help the small companys plan there day instead of having someone wait all day with the keys to the location.

Only complaint is that the file was never coordinated to include all activity. Associated permits to move portable buildings were not filed with the main permit, so we were told at each step that we did not have permits for the portables when that was actually the first thing we did. Notes that I submitted as instructed from our preliminary review were not filed either so agreements reached in the preliminary review were not available to reviewers (though I e-mailed them individually to them as well) and comments were unnecessarily drawn on issues already resolved.

Our most recent experience involved the permitting of a tenant finish-out at a high rise office building. The comments on the question concerning the quality of the visit or information received were comments on repeated phone calls; the building official did not want to meet to discuss hold comments. The process drug out 60 days. The continuing problem in plan reviews, building permits, and then inspections is consistency. Building looks at an issue one way, fire another, etc. Then it gets to the field and there is another interpretation. Consistency is also an issue from one permit to the next. The interpretation of the code has changed to the point where what was once allowed now is not. Over all it seems that more training is needed on the 2003 IBC. Also, a continuing impression is that the staff is overworked and overwhelmed.

Our Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) took over 9 months to clear the platting & zoning process. This was far too long. The Building Permitting process took nearly 4 months to clear. Nearly 14 months to clear the 2 processes is far too long. This should have taken 4 - 6 months, tops. We have built SNFs in 5 different states, in many different cities, both rural & urban. Never has it taken anywhere near this long for these processes to clear. It has never taken more than 6 months on any of our projects, anywhere. This caused us to have to get extensions from the State of Texas and it cost us a great deal of additional money on interest on the land, among other things, and these extra expenses come right off our bottom line. While the staff was generally courteous and polite, they did not seem to have any interest in helping us move our project forward. It seemed as though, if there was any way an excuse could be found to delay the platting, zoning and permitting process, it was used. We have 3 other projects, 2 SNFs & 1 Assisted Living Facility, scheduled for San Antonio over the next 18 - 24 months. We can only hope & pray that the process is improved in the City's offices.

Over my experience in requesting Zoning Letters in Dallas etc.. The cost her is 6 times as high in SA. I have requested them prior and they have taken a week. Then this past time in SA, they statted it would be two Months and this costs the borrower approx. \$50,000 to hold his rate because we could not close the loan in time and the city just stated that

they were sorry and there was nothing they could do to help the situation. All it was is a require 1 page letter which I requested to right and just have them review. Not very good service and no cooroperation.

Over the last couple of months, I have had nothing but problems with the city. I have had problems with the city taking money out of the escrow account. They should have permission to use the escrow account. What if we have money in there for other reasons, such as re-inspections and so forth. I have also had a problem with Mr. Rodriquez, he is rude and feels like he needs to clarify himself over and over again. I am not a child, I don't need to be spoken to like a child. Dropping of permits is extemely difficult, also the plan reviewers feel the need to get up and go to lunch while you are sitting there, they also take there time helping customers. There have been several occassions when having a plan proccessed cost more than it should. There needs to be more consistency in the pricing of permits.

over the last three years the service has improved but- i think that the cosa should consider raising salaries in the plan review department in order to attract qualified personel to these jobs (plan review, intake)

Overall, fair to good service provided. Not true with all Commercial Reps, but one in particular (don't remember the name of fellow) was asking me how to perform specific tasks that I was seeking his help with.

paid \$75 fast-track fee but felt 3 weeks was not fast . . .

People at the front desk are helpful to a certain degree. However, their hands are tied when plan review is so backed up. I think it is the plan review team that needs help with either more people or better organization. We need to be able to speak to them directly with questions and answers. They are virtually untouchable and unreachable.

Permits TAKE TO LONG.

Permitting process was handled through our architect. Fire permitting has been nothing but trouble. Multiple reviews. One individual will recommend changes. We make them and then someone else disapproves and directs other changes. There does not seem to be standardized rules that this office reviews by. It was time consuming and extremely frustrating.

Plan review and permit possess seems to be taking longer. Plan review passed 30 days for initial review and some hold comments generated on information that was included on the plans, but missed by the reviewer.

Plan review examiners need to be responsive with phone calls or emails. They need to respond within 24 hrs. The plan review by appointment needs to be coordinated. Plans need to be reviewed by all departments within twop weeks so that responses to city plan review comments can be addressed at least a week before the PRBA meeting and the plan review examiners will have reviewed them before the meeting. A team leader should be

present in the meeting at all times and not leave the attendees waiting for the next plan reviewer to show up. Too much is wasted.

Plan review is extremely lengthy in the amount of time it takes to review plans for building permit.

plan review process is way too slow. All disciplines must comment on the plans before any of the comments can be responded to. The time period is supposed to be 35 days (which is too long to begin with) and it typically takes 40 to 50 days. Significant delay to progress which translates to cost.

Plan review time takes too long. Workload of your staff needs to be reviewed and additional personnel hired.

Preliminary plan review needs to be more organized. Everyone involved should attend and not come in one at a time. Almost seemed that it was on an "at convience" basis.

Process needs streamlining. I was 2nd in line and waited 30 minutes to start my process. Once I got to the head of the line things went well.

Re: Clearing inspection for CPS to set permanent meters. For CPS to set permanent meters on a new residential home they require that the structure to have passed all inspections from the city building department. The City of SA is suppose to inform CPS of the "passed" final inspections by there new "computer system", the city tells me this should be an automatic event when the inspections are entered into the computer. It is not! Our office has to call numerous times on every final and beg the building department to call CPS and tell them it has in fact cleared inspections. This takes up several extra days and in this busy time of residential building in San Antonio we always have people waiting to close and move-in. Please see if this system cannot be implemented as it was designed to do. It is taking up a lot of our office's time and the time of people in the building department. Thank you, **[name and company name removed]**

Received differing information on obtaining a permit on this particular job.

Regarding building permits & inspections, COSA the process seems to be subjective and ever changing. Requirements are always changing from project to project. Objectives for receiving a Certificate of Occupancy are not clearly defined.

Response time is horrible, We now tell client that permit time for the entire process on commercial projects is two to four months at best due to the slow or no response to items holding up the permit or no ability to find out how to answer the city questions to move the permit along. Most responses from the city to not provide assistance to what the problem is in enough detail so our responses which we pay for each response is often not the right answer and we pay in time and money for the additional responses.

Review process for permitting and attempt to decrease time frame.

Review process for plans takes too long; plans could be certified by a Private sector Architect or Engineer could certify the plans as complying with the city rules and regulations. The city still has the C of O as compliance backup. A commercial permit should not take over 2 week to obtain.

Service while at Development Services is generally good. Many times issues discussed or agreements made are not upheld further into the review process. This is especially true when it comes to the MDP process.

SIGN PERMIT DEPARTMENT NEEDS REVIEW. OTHER CITIES SUCH AS HOUSTON HAS A AVERAGE TURN AROUND OF 3 DAYS FOR ALL SIGNS. WE HAVE A 3 WEEK TURN AROUND. WE DO NOT HAVE A PLAN CHECKING SYSTEM AND ALL INFORMATION IS RECEIVED AND REVIEWED BY THE INSPECTORS AND THE CURRENT SYSTEM IS HE WHO CRIES THE MOST GET THE ATTENTION. (NO REGARDS TO DATES RECEIVED. ONE PERSON RECEIVES AND INSPECTS AND ENTERS THE DATA IN THE SYSTEM. (BAD ,BAD,BAD SYTEM). BY THE WAY THIS IS MY PERSONAL VIEW. AND MOST PEOPLE THAT I HAVE TALKED TO. DONT WANT TO SAY ANYTHING BECAUSE OF A BACKLASH FROM INSPECTORS. DONT TAKE THIS WRONG BUT THE INSPECTORS ARE NOT AT FAULT ITS POOR PLANING AND UNDERSTAFFING. A DATE SYSTEM AND MORE FIELD INSPECTORS HELPING WITH OFFICE DATA WILL HELP THE SYSTEM. FOR NOW. BUT A PLAN CHECKED AND THE USAGE OF OTHER INSPECTORS SUCH AS ELECTRICAL WILL ALSO HELP IN THE FUTURE (SIGN PEOPLE WILL HATE ME FOR SAYING THIS) UPDATE WITH TRAINED STAFF AND RAISE THE PERMIT FEE'S HOW DOES THE CITY MAKE IT WITH A THE CURRENT FEES WHEN THE HAVE DATA ENTRY PLAN REVIEWS FIELD INSPECTORS WITH AVERAGE PERMITS COSTING \$50.00 THE SIGN PEOPLE MAKE MORE THAN THAT BACK TO THE HOUSTON DEAL min RACEWAY COST IN 1998 \$199.00 PER RACEWAY (THEY HAVE A FULL DEPARTMENT WITH A SYSTEM FOR SIGNS AND DO SHOP AND FIELD INSPECTIONS) WE DONT EVEN CHECK THE HOLES ON PYLON SIGNS (THE STORES I,VE BEEN TOLD ARE OF HOLE UNDER DUG WITH CONCRETE BAGS TROWN IN THE HOLES. I KNOW THAT IT NOT REQUESTED BUT **MY NAME IS [removed] PHONE #210-XXX-XXXX SM 346** AGAIN I DONT BLAME THE INSPECTORS ITS THE WAY THINGS ARE SET UP.

slow, time consuming, not streamlined

Sorry that it took me so long to respond, I have been trying to get permits. Thank you for taking an interest in one of San Antonio's most problematic departments. I understand that the development killing tree ordinance is being addressed. It just does not make since to charge people to remove cedar trees on there own property when other government agencies like LCRA are paying ranchers to remove them in order to save water. I hope that the changes will also address the mesquite trees. By far, the biggest problem with the department is the wait time it takes to get a permit. I know that many of the problems are a result of poor plans that are submitted to the city by the architects but there are also

other issues that contribute to this problem. The city is continually adopting new code guidelines which makes the requirements an always moving target for those who are drawing the plans. These codes are not reviewed or altered prior to approval in order to make them specific to the San Antonio area, or in some instances, to even make common sense. Then you add the problem that they are so all encompassing, that they could be mistaken for the IRS Code Book. Every time a plan examiner is hired or goes to a school for additional training course, they come back with a new, previously un-enforced code from the book and we are once again force to make changes to the plans. The one thing that would do the most to speed up the plan checking process would be to do away with the rule that requires the plans to go through the entire review process before the responses can be addressed. Each of the 11-15 departments must look at the plan before you can address the problem that the first examiner may have had with the plans. Considering that each reviewer has five days to look at the plans, that can be up to two months before the very first problem is addressed. It probably takes the examiner extra time to reacquaint himself with the plan before he can approve the required changes. Then when the changes are resubmitted, they each have an additional five days the review them again before any further question that may arise can be addressed and the cycle continues. If the problem issues could be addressed as the plans move through the process, when you got to the end, all of the problems would be solved and the permit would be ready. I have never understood why the city does not wake up to the fact that they are losing a large amount of tax revenue by not helping these projects get completed in a timely manor. You can't tax the completed project until it is completed! **[name and company removed]**

Staff is friendly and helpful, but is always overloaded with review packages. Drainage review for my project took more time that should be needed. In addition, the same submittal was already reviewed by Development Services staff for a permit and yet the platting department insisted that they also had to review and approve the same information. With the number of submittals today at the City, there should be a way to eliminate duplication of effort in the same building!

Staff meets to review requests for acceptance of alternate methods of code compliance but does not have the architect or owner in attendance. When trying to come to some acceptable solutions, this process takes an excessive amount of time.

Staff seems extremley busy and could use assistance

Staff was great but had to return did not immediately have the data needed on hand. Staff spervisor contacted office that DID have info and it was faxed to Las Palmas. Information sought (city parks maps)NOT online.

Subdivision approval process is to lengthy and ownerous. The reviewers/departments do not process applications until the last day or so. City employees do not understand the cost and blame that is placed on the engineers by our clients or the revenue the city loses due to failed projects.

Takes to long to pull permits

tech support issues for dynamic portal is cumbersome. Difficult to get question answered. Cannot close permit on line - various messages - disallow request. Disconnect info between branches and one stop.

The "One Stop Shop" concept is a total disappointment. The staff does not respond in a timely fashion. The response from job to job is not consistent. Their "system" is to find something wrong (even minor issues) so they can put the plans on hold and move on to the next in line. This is their answer to doing "volume" but all it causes is back log. Several times our plans have been put on hold for items that do not even pertain to our project. An example, an asbestos report not included in the plan submittal, THE PROJECT WAS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION. Another, plans put on hold for not indicating fire hydrant locations, THE JOB WAS A 2,500 SQ.FT. INTERIOR FINISH OUT IN A 20 YEAR OLD BUILDING. The list could go on and on. Contractors, Developers, Architects, Owner's, etc. all agree the Permit Process is a total failure.

The 10 day and walkthrough permits go through with no problem and in quick time. The 30 day projects often get bogged down in certain trades.

The ability to obtain permits by smaller companies such as mine are very time consuming.

The biggest complaint from myself and all other construction companies and subcontractors is the inspection process. I have had so many problems of late with the inspectors. Should you wish to discuss or e-mail me please do so.

The builders update process system looks like isn't working. I changed my e-mail address with the Development center and still I'm not receiving info at the new address I left.

The building permit process takes far too long and code requirements are inconsistently applied.

The city needs to hire folks with more education or training with construction. They also need to be more accessible to phone calls or email questions. Overall the new team concept is helping but there is still great difficulty getting a permit. The initial reviews take too long and then we don't get back enough comments to respond adequately without going back and forth several times. This is particularly true with the fire reviewers. Our clients aren't really concerned about the cost of permits or preliminary reviews. They will pay more if that helps you hire more folks.

The city of San Antonio needs to concentrate on the area of releasing homes for permanent meters to CPS. There have been several, many, numerous, occasions where my organization had to pay utility bills for homeowners who were not able to transfer utilities because the city had not released them. All of the necessary inspections had been completed and permits were correct. The city just never released them. We have spent approximately \$2-\$3K over the last year because of such occurrences.

The City of San Antonio needs to hire more inspectors, and permit applications need to be processed alot faster. Construction projects are being held up because of the City's manning shortage.

The coordination between our city permit process & our application/interview with the HDRC doesn't seem to exist. The process in general to get the city permits has been untimely, expensive and overly bureaucratic especially given the scope of our project (1500 sq ft & under 50,000 in construction cost). The city needs to create a fast track permit process for small businesses that are opening in spaces of less than 3000 sq. ft and that are under \$50,000 in construction costs.

The customer service area (where Certificates of Occupancy are picked up) is extremely inefficient and slow. When trying to see if a CofO is ready the website does not contain all information. It is only after a long phone call, talking to several different people or a long a wasted trip to the Development Services Building that I find out something is missing. Usually, that something is out of the ordinary and does not apply and it gets waived. I think this can be easily fixed by one, adding more tellers and two, have the website provide more detailed pertinent information. Usually, the CofO is something that we need in a hurry and the added stress of an ineffecient system is not welcomed. The CofO "hang-ups" has happened at least 10 times to me personally and more to us as a company. Learning the system and knowing people to talk to helps, but it does not override the what I think is the underlying problem. Thanks for listening.

The Development Services is still somewhat unorganized. Still have problems with loosing plans, not knowing where plans are. We build all over the country and find that San Antonio still is lacking in many areas when it comes to permitting. We have gotten to know certain contacts that help the problems, but would hate to think of an outsider coming in. Need to ask for more plans and more fees to shore up the help. Thanks, **[name removed]**

The different departments have no idea what the other ones are doing. too many people walking around not doing anything and the wait for permits was over an hour.

The entire permit process seems to be one of "how can we be an impediment?" rather than being a constructive process. Also, the process is taking much longer than ever, rather than being streamlined.

The entire process of recieving a permit takes long. Regardless of it being a small project or a big project the time is the same. This process needs to be faster. If it was not for business coming to San Antonio, there would be no development of the City nor jobs. We are the customers of the City and as customer I suggest that there needs to be a greater effort in improving the time it takes to recieve a permit, so that business can get started.

The experience while in person at the Center was great. The permit process slowed down while the plans travelled between departments and it was hard to get in touch with reviewers to resolve plan review comments.

The fact that a notary is required for Certificate of occupancy. It would seem logical that you keep one available.

The general process of the one stop is great and is quick moving if you have all the information the staff wants to see. It is very frustrating though to be held up during the permitting process for insignificant minor details that wouldn't make a difference to the project in any way shape or form.

The general public is not aware of policies and procedures of the city. We need help understanding the process up front. I stumbled through the process and was corrected along the way instead of up front.

The influx of new plan reviewers has caused a lack of consistency in plan reviews and code interpretation. Plan reviews are also taking too long. A small retail center, on 1-2 acres, shell building only, is taking 7-8 weeks to be reviewed by city plan reviewers. This should be cut down to 4 weeks. 8 weeks is way too long to wait on reviews. Plan may move 2-3 reviewers in one day, then nothing for 5-14 days. This requires us to monitor the plan review and notify the Plan Review Managers when we see the plan not moving. But by then it has been 8-14 days that we feel we have lost.

The inspector that comes to inspect should extend the courtesy to call and meet him/her at the job site. They show up and if you are not there they leave out inspecting. We all are very busy and cannot afford to wait all day. 2 hrs (+-) lead time would be nice. I expanded my business from Corpus Christi, Texas and found your inspectors less courteous.

The lack of a receptionist on the second floor was disconcerting, though every person who passed by asked if I needed help.

The main issue is that everybody has their own way of how things should be submitted and the process has been going on since Jan 05 and we still have not received a permit and we are in the month of October and still no full permit. Thank you for taking time to help out in this area that needs to be looked at.

The most common complaint I hear from my direct reports is that inspections are not done on a timely basis. A 1 or 2 day lead time has translated to 3 or 4 days. Understandably, the load has increased for each inspector with the growth that the city has had, but there has been poor planning in order to keep up.

The number system was screwed up both times I was down there and the wait was unbelievably long.

The one stop in my opinion is more a waste of time. In the past I have had to wait at least 30 minutes before having my number called. My very first experience was not fun. I hate to have to go to the one stop if I don't have to.

The one thing that I did not like about their services is when I am being helped it takes twice the amount of time it should because the process of doing what I needed was

interrupted often by the telephone. Just as a suggestion I think they should have one specific person answering phone issues.

The One-Stop concept is good and should be able to work. Conflicting information and waiting to talk to rep needs to be worked out.

The online and faxed, plan review progress reports are helpful, but a little difficult to fully understand. The crucial information, such as name of project, problem code reference, reason for the "hold", and City contact information, are not clearly highlighted.

The only flaw I can express is the inspection process, All the inspectors come at different times throughout the day. It would be more convenient if the inspection was done by one individual.

The only thing I would like to request is the expediting of the building and fire permits required for the Toyota Plant's On Site Suppliers!

The only way to get a fire alarm plan reviewed in a timely manner is paying an afterhours fee. Therefore, for the past three months almost everything we submit for review must be on an afterhours basis if we want it back before the project is complete. At one time the fire alarm contractors were told about a goal of 21 day turnaround. Our experience is the "norm" can be 45+ days. The fire alarm plan review department is severely understaffed. A problem that has existed for over a year.

The on-premise sign permitting is a joke now. Permit request are taking too long and now it has been decided that on-premise permits must now prove that a business is in compliance with Certificate of Occupancy. Most shops are small and must have business to stay in business. We do the right thing by taking out the permits and yet we also have to do the City's job on compliance. Is there not a department that does this? If the sign shop doesn't have this information (CofO proof) permits will not even be considered. When proof is given it takes weeks to get permit issued. If license holder goes to City with all requested information permit will not be issued, it still takes weeks.

The people are good and friendly...there just is not enough of them to service us all on a timely basis

The permitting process in the city is generally ok. With layer upon layer of requirements sometimes the left hand does not inform the right hand what is happening. The staff is generally working diligently to process the request. Thought should be given when a position is not filled then the city needs to reduce some requirements that are being slowed down by not enough staff to process the requirements. The last comment when you are paying for permits the girls are behind a bulletproof glass and the communication system does not work. Try communiting with the customers through a speaker system that does not work. Why is the impersonal nature needed? The city has not experienced a robbery that would necessitate the extreem standards the city has gone to. The city needs to make more permits attainable over the internet. This will allow for the contractors not needing to travel for simple permits. To sum it up the entire city process works like your questioner. You have to take a baby step and then wait for someone ,or the computer ,to

make a decision, then move onto the next phase, like your questioner you ask one question then we have to wait for something to happen before we can proceed.

The permitting process is extremely complex, bound up in tons of red tape, far too slow. I think every taxpayer should have the opportunity to apply for a building permit to see how bad the process is.

The person at the intake counter and receiving new projects need to be better informed on what we need to submit for permit. Forms are sometimes updated but no one says anything until we show up with a wrong application or something missing. As a general rule I always call first to check the submittal checklist before coming in to drop off plans. Twice before I have been stopped at the intake counter because the forms I submitted was outdated. It was the same form I picked up at the service counter the week before. These forms when they are updated should be made accessible to the public for our use. After all we are the people who need the latest information for submittals. I think everyone generally tries hard but there is a definite lack of communication between the One Stop Center staff and the public who come through the doors needing assistance.

The plan check procedure should be accelerated

The plan review periods for each department are very inconsistent, for example plumbing, electrical and mechanical comments generally are generated within the target 7-14 day period but building and fire have taken as long as 6 weeks, which makes the overall period for a plan review excessively long.

The Platting process for individuals building family homes is lengthy and most of all very costly.

The process and requirements of re-submitting plans and specifications if they are rejected after the first review, should be attached or included on the explanation of the initial review. For example, a set of plans were rejected by three different departments. I was able to view this online. There was no information in the review comments or in the initial check list detailing the process of re-submittals.

The process has improved but still is generally disconnected

The process is laborious overall. Resubmitting during construction is time consuming. Reviews are not uniform throughout. Preliminary plan reviews are inconsistent with actual review. there are too many inconsistencies in the review process and it is time intensive.

The process is primarily oriented to STRUCTURES and little if any emphasis is placed on site-related issues. For example, the permitting of a parking lot is not clearly addressed. Staff also needs training in the interpretation of the UDC where gray areas exist. Another example: Bufferyard requirements- staff has mis-interpreted the requirements on a number of projects, placing buffers between similar land uses while a residential use is un-buffered against new commercial property. My list goes on and on.

The process is slower than I would like for it to be in general - for instance, 6+ people will be waiting, 3-4 people will be at the stations for commercial intake, but only one is taking plans. There is also some inconsistency that I do not like - on my last intake, I had to go and retrieve a legal description for my project myself - they have always done it at intake in the past - I inquired as to when they changed to us having to retrieve that information and was told that they had not, it is just that all of the intake workstations do not have the software to do that, and if you get one that doesn't you have to retrieve yourself. Luckily, I know people in the planning department and could walk over to their area and ask them to pull one for me, without having to drive someplace and drive back - but had to restart the intake process once I got the legal description. There needs to be a decision as to whether we need to always have that ahead of time or whether they will pull it for us at intake - not legal description roulette.

The process is so much better than it used to be! Some frustration occurs when I try and contact a particular person either a plan checker or arborist. Unless that person has given me their direct number, I am put through a long wait for general information and have never yet had a phone call returned when I left my number. I have tried looking on line for direct phone numbers but can't locate any particular site that lists them. Also would be helpful to have a summary of inspectors' phone numbers on line and what areas they are responsible for. Since they rotate so often, we builders are sometimes left up in the air as to who our inspectors are. The permitting process, while cumbersome, has improved. I have been informed by several individuals that unless I pay the \$75 "rush" fee, my permit won't be looked at until all other permits that have agreed to pay this fee has been checked. To me that is extremely unfair - there should be a first in first checked rule not first checked if you pay me extra. In addition, while the plan checking is relatively rapid (again, if I pay the fee) the permit then sits for the arborist approval. I am currently waiting for 3 permits that have been approved by the plan checkers but are waiting for the arborist. This process needs to be as timely as the plan checking, preferably without the "rush" fee.

the process is untimely, no one cares if you get a permit in a timely manner. the plan checkers are rude, uncaring and will not take time to explain a problem encountered in the process. the whole experience is very disgusting.

The process of obtaining permits and CO's is not "One Stop". You have to go through 3-4 separate lines (if everything is in order) just to complete the process. It is inefficient and time consuming.

The process of permitting seems to be way too cumbersome and long. Anything that can be done to speed up the review process would be helpful.

The requirements of requesting a demolition permit in an historical district were extremely vague. I submitted my paperwork in person and was told by a member of the historic district department that the information I had submitted was sufficient. I then received a letter stating that the information I provided was insufficient. This contradicted all written instructions. The historic district review panel has a strangle hold on individuals living in these districts. All power is held and all decisions are made by a

small minority. There need to be more clearly delineated guidelines to control the amount over power that these few officials have over peoples' personal property and lives.

The review process takes too long in my opinion.

The services provided were very organized and once they called on you it went very smooth. The only small concern is the wait. Both times I was their, it took well over 30min to be called on. Factoring the time was around lunch time, but it should be noted that is the time most working professionals take time to do this type of business.

The staff at One Stop is always very helpful and proffesional. The biggest issue is the lag with the review process for Buiding permit and Fire Department sprinkler review. The Fire Inspection scheduling process is an issue as well. Both departments indicate the problems with these areas is due to overload of the current manpower. On projects of the size that we build we schedule 120 days for permitting in San Antonio. That is a full 30 to 60 days longer than we schedule in Dallas,, Austin, and surrounding areas. It is not due to the number of steps in the review process, it is due to the amount of time the plan sets in each department.

The staff often responds to permitting issues strictly according to written codes and guidelines without taking practical and common sense issues into account. In dealing with site development issues, the review staff does not have the benefit of actually seeing the site before acting on a request. The staff often has to "...wait for an Inspector" to visit the site and report back. This causes confusion and takes additiional time.

The staff was helpfull and I have no issues with them. The actual code compliance inspection team has a long way to go! You might want to consider reorganize that team. Different responses from different inspectors and supervisors.

The storm water prossess is flawed, we were required to submit storm water plan and pay the fee at re-plat. Changes required by permitting changed the drainage plan and made for double the cost to me. and weeks of delay. Storm water run off is a permit problem not a replat problem. You are putting the cart ahead of the horse.

THE STORM WATER/DRAINAGE REVIEW IS TAKING ALONG TIME.

The system is irretrievably broken and needs to be scrapped and started over, efficiently. Perhaps next time, employees could be hired to actually do work instead of attending to their own agendas.

The time it takes for design review is too long. It has taken over 6 months for a permit in some cases.

The time it takes to obtain a building permit is very difficult to deal with considering contractors will only hold their prices 60 days and you cannot submit your plans until they are finished . It has taken as much as 6 months to get a permit.

The time required to get a permit for many of the projects we do are too long. 30+ days is too long for a review of projects 20,000 square feet or smaller. 14 days would be acceptable. New codes that we have to build under now are too restrictive, I believe that existing buildings should be grandfathered from having to make costly upgrades. I have bid many jobs lately that the customer backed-out of due to the high cost that was incurred due to the added code cost. The primary area I am thinking of is the energy conservation codes.

The turn around time for new construction plans is extremely long. Work cannot begin prior to receipt of approved plans and permit being returned to the contractor and most of the time the turn around is SLOW and causes our customers to be outraged at us when it is not our fault. This city has been very unhelpful and unwilling to be partners with the fire sprinkler contractors. Most cities in Texas check our plans and approved with/or without comments within 10 working days. The SA Fire Sprinkler Plan Reviewers(William Burros, Suanne Callow,& Mike Shannon)look for anything, no matter how small an item and reject our drawings. This practice has slowed the construction in this city and has cost my company thousands of dollars. Please note that our State of Texas Lic. holds us liable for ALL problems and we must fix OUR problems at our own expense, prior to the approvals by the City of SA Fire Dept. field inspectors. There for it only makes (\$)sense for us to do it right the first time. The problem is that Suanne Callow has stated in the past, that the field inspectors do not know what they are doing so it is up to her to catch ALL mistakes. It is impossible in construction to fix all mistakes in the planning/design phase of the project. Changes in the field will always happen! The city inspectors do catch problems in the field and we do make the proper changes. "This is how construction works" The hiring of additional, competent, plan review personnel to assist Suanne Callow would be a big help. The fire dept. rep that accepts money at the front desk is not very helpful and almost seems threatening. It seems we spend more time dealing with the city on issues of who does what than it takes to do the job. We would like to be able to start jobs without approved plans. We would take full responsibility for the starting of these jobs and would need to be up to code before a city inspector approves it anyway(the city isn't going to accept a system that isn't up to code anyway). Thanks, Also the turn around time for plan review for even the smallest remodel project takes entirely too long. We have our plans rejected for minor little things that could be corrected with a note or memo back to us, and a permit should be issued on the first submittal. However Suanne Callow seems to not choose to issue a permit even for minor problems, we are all human and little mistakes are made daily by us of course, and the plan review dept, as well. When our permit is just automatically rejected, even for a minor little item, we are forced to re-submit, then our re-submittal goes to the bottom of the re-submittal pile and we are forced to wait weeks sometimes even months for a permit to be issued. These remodel projects are almost always fast track jobs, and we are forced to man the job with no permit, and then wait for a permit to be issued weeks later before we can schedule our inspections. There must be a better way of handling this situation. William Burros and Mr. Pena have been aware of these problems for the last five (5)years and have done nothing about these problems. We pay very high permit fees and the city only has one full time plan reviewer. For example, the City of Laredo has four (4) full time fire sprinkler plan reviewers and only charges \$360.00 per plan review & field inspection. Something is very wrong with this picture! Please help the Fire

Sprinkler Contractors in this city, we have been asking for help for a long time! Are you going to help us? Thank you, **[name, company, and number removed]**

The visit in person was very helpful but trying to do follow ups via the telephone were difficult.

The wait to obtain a permit (not only to speak with a permit writer but to actually receive the permit) is ridiculous.

The waiting process to get to a counter can be long. When there are six people waiting to get permits and not one customer being helped but six people standing behind the desk you wonder what they are doing.

The waiting time to speak with someone is too long, I personally waited 45-1 hour just to be able to speak with someone on permit issues.

the web site could be more user friendly. the voice mail for requesting in spections could be better as well. the time frame for a pulling a permit could be a little quicker also. But over all it is a good system.

There doesn't ever seem to be enough people on staff to attend to you on a timely basis.

There always seems to be a hold put in the plan review process for site improvement and building shell projects concerning the building envelope Energy Compliance Certificate. For (unoccupied) building shell and site improvement projects, an ECC is not required since the building is un-insulated / unoccupied space. This hold requesting an ECC during plan review for building shell and site improvement sometimes can cause unnecessary delays in the review process.

There always seems to be another form of paperwork required in order to submit for permit. While there is a comprehensive list of requirement provided it always seems to be a matter of interpretation when it comes to the submission of permit often requiring an additional visit to complete the process. In other words a lot of inconsistencies have occurred over the years with the Development Services Dept.

There are apparently only 2 city inspectors for the entire city. This seems extremely unusual for a city of the size of San Antonio.

There are many past due required annual inspections of fire suppression systems at apartment complexes throughout San Antonio - this represents a large number of people - and the Fire Department is NOT doing it's part to require these businesses to get their annual and required inspections !

THERE ARE TIMES THAT THE WORK LOAD AT YOUR OFFICE COULD STAND MORE HELP TO EXPEDITE THE PLAN CHECK.

There are times when requesting a street cut permit and the street has been previously cut by someone else yet I am told I cannot cut the street to provide residential service, this I

do not understand, especially when the previous street cut is sunken and the street is not a new street. Also I am requesting that my survey be kept VERY CONFIDENTIAL.

There is a lack of consistency in the plan approval process at Development Services. An example of this was on my last plan submittals for two exact single family homes, reviewed by two different plan reviewers, with different comments. I have suggested that the same plan reviewer reviews the same plans so there is consistency in the review process and it would help in cutting down the review time.

There is a lack of consistent understanding on sister projects coming in. There is a real need to learn from prior processes and not do rework again and again. We don't have to reinvent the wheel.

There is a need for more representatives taking in permit submittals ~ perhaps designating different personnel for different types of permitting (ie: building, trade, etc.). I have had to wait an hour the last two times I have submitted permitting for sing. fam. residential new construction ~ valuable time wasted.

there is no problem submitting the project for permitting, its the time it takes to process the permit and than responses won't be accepted until all departments have viewed the project.

There is no signage or indication that a number must be had to see a representative. I waited in line, as previously, and when I approached the commercial desk, I was told I needed a number. There was no one behind me and I was refused service until I got a number.

There needs to be an internal audit of the process at the Development Center. No ONE person can tell you what you need to know. Everyone has a different idea on what is required which makes it very frustrating. Each time you go down to the "One Stop", with the information previously provided, you are then required to provide additional information.

There needs to be better interaction/coordination between divisions/departments involved in the development process and staff needs to be more knowledgeable about overall requirements.

There were several things: 1. There was never one person that I could contact about my project. 2. Every time we tried to submit drawing they were not allowed to be submitted because of things that were not mentioned in the checklist or the preliminary review. There was something new everytime we submitted. 3. I was told I could not FedEx or overnight my drawing to the city. We are in Austin. It was very inconvenient to drive down to not have our drawings submitted. 4. Also, although there are many categories listed in the building permit process, but there were no categories for Landscape Architects and their work in the permitting process. A lot of our projects do not fit into building square footage, renovations, Electrical, HVAC Systems, etc... that are listed in the permitting process. We do a lot of parks that are not commercial or residential, Sign entries for developments, and Recreation centers with no buildings just restroom

facilities. 5. Staff was not well informed about to handle these catagories. Everytime we got a different answer. 6. Resubmittals are not clearly spelled out. Do you just resubmit for parts not passed or do you submit the entire package again? No one person to contact about resubmitting to correct the problems. There was, however, someone to talk to about why it didn't pass, but they could not tell me who or what to submit to correct the problem. Overall experience set our project back over a year. Cost us and our client lots of money. Things have continued to change with the City of San Antonio during the last year, hopefully for the better. Thank you for your time and willingness to hear the input.

They quoted me a different price than is listed in the price list.

This experiance is only one of many. In general, the areas where we have significant problems are in the plan review and permit process, which takes an excessive amount of time, and in the inspection process, where the lack of consistency on the part of inspectors causes significant confusion and additional expense. While I appreciate the Mayor taking an interest in COSA Development Services, this survey seriously misses the real issues that hamper construction services in San Antonio.

This is the biggest waste of a persons time I can think of. Waiting for a doctor rates higher than all the hoops that you have to jump through to get a permit in this city. There is no excuse for the time delays caused by the inefficient plan permitting process. My feeling is, new multi-million dollar bldg. but same old B.S. I can think of no bigger deterrent to new business in this city than the One Stop.....

This project has been in permit review for over a year. Our form paid for a pre-review before completing construction documents to assure the plans were correct. Once submitted...the Plat process caused a delay of 4 months (costing the GC appx \$50,000.00), the additional requests by the reviewers caused \$100,000.00 in Change Orders, we still have a conditional permit even though all of the information has been provided to the reviewer. They must be too busy to complete the review.

This was a historical project that did not fit their standard criteria, therefore it created problems in the system. The system was not flexible to support anything that deviated from the norm.

This was our first attempt to obtain a residential building permit. We chose to "play by the rules". Every inquiry was met with a friendly attitude, however, we received eroneous information that sent us to satelite branches which in turn refered us back to the main office. Each step was met with yet another obstacle. We became annoyed with the process. Our efforts have failed. We understand, now, why many people do not "play by the rules". We were also confused about a \$300 fee regarding a variance processes which is non-refundable. We would also like to see the procedures or an outline as to what is needed to get this permit without a run-a-round. After the third attempt we have become frustrated due to incomplete information. It is unnecessarily complicated. Aside from that, we would like to add that the 311 service is one of the best services the city offers. The staff is very polite and professional. We have called 311 many times and have received instant results (ie, potholes, malfunctioning traffic lights, trees obstructing

school zone signs, etc). And lastly, we would like to see a city service that could check the credibility of a business (not the Better Business Bureau; they take too long.) The service could provide instant information, both positive and negative, where San Antonio residents would be encouraged to call and give feedback with strict guidelines (in order to prevent erroneous information). We believe this service would become as helpful as the 311 service. Thank you.

Though the staff was professional I am shocked at the time it took to process the permit application. I have been in the commercial building construction business for over 40 years and have built major buildings through out most of this country. I find the overall process of the building department reviewing the drawings extremely slow. In fact I must say, with all due respect, this town has the slowest review process in the nation. It should not take 6+ months to have a first review and receive back the departments comments.

Thought it was strange I needed a permit for a site permit for a hot tub. Understand why an electrical permit would be required, but for a hot tub/spa siting??? Can't complain too much, overall the experience was rather painless and my hot tub meets code.

Time consuming process. Minor plats that are only supposed to take 10 business days if there are no holds still take close to 60 days. Major plats as well are taking longer to process.

Too much red tape for review and getting building permit, along with way too much time. You have building inspectors, right! Let them do their job and be the ones to make sure the construction is installed correctly.

Too slow.

Took 16 trips to recieve a permit for temporary offices. My client could not understand the time it took for this permit.

Waited 45 minutes to see a clerk.

We develop apartment complexes across the country and San Antonio is the worst experience we have ever had. The plan review process took forever and was not complete. Some of the inspectors were extremely difficult to deal with. The fire sprinkler review process was absolutely ridiculous. We hope to have a much more favorable experience our our next project in San Antonio that we will start next Spring.

We do not have enough plumbing inspectors! We have the same number that we had in 1970. The plumbers raise our fees voluntarily so that we would have more onspectors as the city promised. No results yet! Also, the city plans to have specialized plubing inspectors. This will mean less inspections and more travel time to various locations. Thank goodness the Fire Dept. does not have specialized EMS service. ie: the drowning EMS ambulance is on the other side of town so it might take awhile before it gets here.

We found the whole experience extremely frustrating. Commitments that were agreed upon by development services at early predevelopment meetings were never met. Getting answers on plan review comments was difficult.

we have to build on time time is money in our business like to see plan go thru quicker and on a timely fashion to help the city to bring more company here to build here as well as to money for the city as well as the company who build them

We paid for overtime to speed up the review process and it was not utilized and the permit review process was too long.

We recently encountered a reviewing department that held up their issuance of a letter of certification because they were asking for some additional notes on the plat that were not required by the UDC and were not applicable to the specific reviewing department. This department submitted to us their comments for the issuance of the LC with the inclusion of a requirement for certain survey data, not a part of their water and sewer reviews, but already covered by the plat map reviewing department.

We were very happy to find out that our preliminary review would be recorded and that items that were discussed would be stated and signed off on. We did not receive any notes and when we sent our notes for approval and agreement signatures we did not receive anything back. The client pays a lot of money to have the session and we should be very professional in the way we record the information and use it in the future.

When a project is being permitted for construction one person needs to be assigned the project at the "One Stop" office and remain the contact for that project until it is completed. If that person is off then an alternate is assigned to that project. Enter-workings as the "One Stop" office should have a procedure in place for alternate to be updated on the Project. The biggest road block due to fact that Hispanics take off work for every special event known to man and having to deal with so many people who are not versed with the special attention needed by the contractor. I must say your system is better than Austin but ranks far below other major Cities in the US. Time is money and the cost of doing business in SA is probably 2-3% just for the time necessary to deal with "One Stop as it now operates on a 13 Million \$ Project this is quite a cost.

When I arrived that morning there was only one clerk working permits and trade licenses; long wait.

When I first started pulling permits 15 years ago a commercial swimming pool permit only took 7 working days now they take 30 working days if I submit everything they need but they always want something new (tree affidavit electric schedule health review) which is already on the building plans. The builder has already submitted the plan to be approved with the pool, tree affidavit, electric schedule. He has already been approved now they want me to resubmit the same plans. Also I am building a new office on 1604. The permit was pulled by [name removed] (ap XXXXXX) and it took over nine months to be approved. In the mean time it cost a lot of time and money. Residential is fine but commercial does not know what the other dept. are doing.

When I first went in to get information about a parking lot because I was buying the property. I was told that it would be no problem, all I needed was the required number of spaces. When I bought the property and tried to get the permit I was told about trees, blue prints and a watering plan that I did not have.

When I took my permits out they gave me a lot of trouble they requested information and then I would take it and they would tell me they did not need it. They made me run around too much. I really think that when you apply for a permit you should stay working with the same representative.

When staff promises to follow up with you, they should. Otherwise, you are left with no info and forced into a situation of explaining to a committee that you can't comply with staff's requests b/c you don't know what they are!

When submitting plans, sometimes I find that there is a lack of consistency. One day they let one thing pass and the next day they don't.

When working on a project, I expected more resources at the "one stop" development. The only thing I got was what was required and that's it! The Development Center didn't offer any help. I would like to see the Center offer financing options, building contractors and other business that might be helpful in my start-up business.

When you are waiting in waiting room to consult with City, you see all of the receptions are available, but nobody calls you for long time??? We'll be appreciated if they try to fix this matter.

While at the Development Center, everyone is very nice. The problem is the length of time it takes to get a permit through the system. Too much time from start to finish. The people are nice, just the system stinks.

While I was at the "One Stop" The computers were down so the clerk could not issue numbers. I know that the IT world is touch and go but you should have a back up process in place. The down time created a huge delay for my schedule.

While polite and professional, the Development Services Department is not geared towards doing business with the public. The system is cumbersome and overbearing with questions and answers coming from multiple sources, each with different requirements. In so far as doing business or responding to the customer in a timely fashion; this department and their processes bring a whole new meaning to "siesta time." And apparently no one within the department cares; as we have not experienced any desire on the part of the city to help develop new tax generating business in San Antonio. We still do not have a building permit and it is now endangering our relationship with our client and his ability to do future developments.

While the personnel were friendly and accommodating, the overall process is much too lengthy, especially the fire review process.

Why can't the process for renewal of a contractor license be streamlined. Why should I have to go to the police station to have a back ground check when the information can be retrieved by internet connection.

Why is it necessary, when pulling an electrical permit, to have to know or find out the building permit number? Can't the city staff look the number up? Don't they trust me?

Why is it taking so long to do something about the horrible experience that is "Development Services". We've been suffering through this for much too long. If the Mayor wants to hear about this in more detail, I am available.

Would like my paperwork stamped in with a receipt back to me, I have laid projects on the counter and they are lost.

It would be helpful for the buildings department to have a poster up showing the steps on how to build a residential house. I for one had to learn all that on my own and it may have been more effective if it were shown on a poster of sorts.

Yes, during the entire process I was having to explain the nature of my request, who I had spoken to, the stage of progress on my request to everyone from the supervisors to the clerks by the ten time I was speaking in tongues.

You have to go in person. A phone message may take days to obtain a response. Do not go late in the day and double check the information you receive to make sure it is accurate. We had a very difficult time with one of the plumbing plan inspectors. He did not seem to understand the plumbing situation for the rehab of our building and we believe he was rude and perhaps unreasonable. We are grateful there are many more employees at the One Stop that genuinely try to help those of us that are not building contractors.

you should be able to do all transactions at the satellite offices that you can do downtown (ie license renewal , all permits like historical, flood plain that pertain to mechanicals.)

You should have a walk thru program for finish outs, like old days downtown you would talk to somebody address your comments, Bam you walk out with a permit or declined.

your system needs a lot of work!

For a \$150,000 remodeling of the interior of an existing building to take around 60 days is not acceptable. Delays caused by so many different road-blocks established by various departments to be sure their particular area is correct or to the so called compliance.

Submitted Plans for a 10,000 s.f. new construction "shell" building on 9-01-05. City completed plan review on 10-25-05 (Unacceptable). Also, many of the "hold" comments could be avoided if the plan examiner actually examined the plans a bit more carefully.

The property in question, which we have owned since 1978, was never in the historic district. Somewhere along the line, the City "corrected" the property description of the

historic district which then put this property in a historic district. Since 1978, we have not had to appear before the HDRC for approval of changes. All of a sudden, that is required. In the late 1980's, an old Texaco filling station on the property was to be designated "HS" but we fought that designation before City Council and it was NOT designated. So now the Historic Preservation Office says the whole property is in the district. We are worn out fighting City Hall and we need to save our money for our old age.

The wait time is too long. Appears not all staff assigned is working to attend to customers.

We have been trying to get a platting since February 2005. We still have nothing approved or platted.

Negative Comments Regarding the Decision Making Process, “Common Sense,” Expertise, and Management of the Department

Common sense is lacking. The fire department only has one fire marshal and anything having to do with passing fire has to go through him. William Burris is a good guy but he needs some help. Ann McGlone is out of control and out of touch in my opinion. Debbie Reid is out of control, out of touch and oversteps her authority. She has a personal agenda that is far more reaching than the city's. We spent over \$100,000 to move a vault location after we were approved by CPS. I can't tell you how many times I had to explain the building code and the UDC to the people that are supposed to be enforcing it. All in all, projects do get built in this city and if you compare it to other cities we aren't doing that poorly. If I didn't have friends at city hall, my experience would have been much worse.
[name removed]

Delayed two weeks because the building department wanted an asbestos report on a new building. In this case, this was unreasonable.

Development Services problems do not lie within their staff. DS needs to get decision makers that can decide which way to go when something is not clearly defined in the UDC. Also, for when there is a special case where the requirements of the UDC do not apply. These special circumstances occur quite regularly in development. In the past you would have to go to the director to get a drainage decision made for instance. I don't necessarily think it is inadequate personnel as much as it is the micromanagement going on throughout the city. Also, the staff should understand why there are certain requirements in the UDC. They should know that just because something is mentioned in the UDC does not make it a requirement on every job. This problem reverts to upper management and training staff.

Every department was not trained as to the same rules. I got a different answer from everyone I spoke with.

General inconsistency in code interpretations between different reviewers still is a problem. Typically have to go over someone's head to resolve holds which adds time and aggravation on the part of the owners we represent. They simply don't understand why this is a problem time and time again.

Highly inconsistent answers coming from the same department. Numerous power struggles within departments are present resulting in disjointed, inconsistent, and lethargic responses from city employees. In multiple cases, the employees themselves did not understand the current city code in order to apply it to the project in a proactive and supportive atmosphere. An entire lack of centralized decision making is present. Too many layers of review exist resulting in incredibly lengthy lead times. I have had the same experiences in the last 60 days on building a new city park for the citizens of San Antonio. The One Stop Service Center was again lethargic and entirely disjointed.

I feel that the current chief building inspector does not have the experience to perform his job. All other inspectors were very helpful.

I had several earlier meetings with city staff on this project. Based on those meetings, we had an agreed upon plan and my client spent considerable time and money to cooperate with the city to achieve the coordinated plan. After final review the city staff changed their minds and required my client to go another direction. In the mean time much time and money was lost and no resolution has been achieved.

I had to go to the office three times before I got somebody to tell me what I needed and how to go about it. After finding this individual I sent everything to thier attention and accomplished my goal.

I worked for the City of San Antonio for almost 29 years and, I did realize how many problems we had until I got on this side of the counter. The key phrase here is "common sense" and not to be afraid to make a dicision.

I would like a single answer to stand when a question arises. Not multiple answers that very with each individual that you talk to.

I would like to see city employees make decisions about plans and ndevelopment using common sence, rather than always going by the "letter of the law" It would be great if employees were always generous with information, as opposed to withholding it. It seems like most (not all) of the employees don't really care about what they do and they don't understand what kind of economic impact the development community has on San Antonio.

In my experience, Code interpretation andcriteria are highly subjective. Criteria deemed to be met in the permitting process may be arbitrarily modified by field inspectors and the crieria are enforced with a great deal of inconsistency between similarb or identical projects.

In submitting for a finish-out for a restraunt, one of the items on the plan review checklist is to provide an "alcohol affidavit/SOB affidavit". when we inquired to the city, nobody knew what this was and we were passed around to numerous departments before we finally got an answer. One would think that if an items is required for a submittal that most everyone would know what that item is, instead of being diverted to numerous other departments.

In the end I felt like not everybody knew what they were doing or didn't know enough about what they were doing to provide proper service.

Inorder to resolve almost any issue (plat hold) that occurs in the process, a meeting has to be held with a senior level staff person to resolve the issue. Much time is wasted by the person trying to do a project in SA and by senior staff.

It's not the folks in the front of the building we have issues with, it is the people reviewing the plans who are not familiar with the codes.

More definite answers from the building plan reviewers. There is always inconsistency during the plan review phase.

My last visit was the result of communication problems between city departments or development personnel. A few minutes face time resolved weeks of trying to resolve issues via the standard way of doing things.

My sense is that the supervisors of the center lack the moral courage necessary to discipline their employees and require professional/problem solving service. Instead, the employees take every opportunity to shirk their work sending customers on endless goose chases only to discover that the original employee was able to accomplish the task needed. The supervisors seek to be their employee's friend -- they seek to be popular as best as I can tell because it is clear to me that the employees operate in an environment in which they believe that they are unaccountable for their own actions.

Need better definitive determinations as to how to provide resolutions to projects that are being held up. example: how do we move forward from here to a resolution, and when do we get an answer. too many times the projects are curtailed without direction

Need more knowledgeable people at the service centers.

No one person gave me the same answer on each of the different times I went for help.

No one wants to take responsibility for any decisions. It would be nice if there was a DEFINED chain of command. If plans get held up in one department the process STOPS.

One of the problems both in the zoning and permitting process is that there is no consistency in zoning recommendations or in the requirements of what is required or not required on building plan submittals. Staff is indecisive of what is required. Higher ups do not have a common sense approach to certain situations, they do not listen to issues raised by their staff, it is my way only attitude (Planning and Development Services). The common first time client is overwhelmed by the city's stringent requirements. The UDC is not user friendly it is complicated. The average citizen is told that in order to use your property for a neighborhood store, first you have to rezone and request a plan amendment (Planning), paid large fees with no guarantees. Plus comply with development requirement he doesn't understand due to the text of the UDC. It is not a easy document to read or use. City staff at times is unsure on the meaning of the text of the UDC. The Planning Department, plan amendment process becomes a conflict in that staff will not support changes to an approved community plan even though the applicant has support from the neighborhood association, who created the plan. Once a plan is adopted it is set in concrete mentality. Both department should be reviewed along with the UDC. The zoning conversion in 2002 created numerous. Individual zoning rights were lost due to the new zonings prohibiting uses enjoyed in the previous zoning. Time and money is lost when individual are told that the only recourse is to go thru a change in zoning process.

People at front desk are courteous and helpful. It's when advice needs to be sought higher up the food chain that things appear to get bogged down. The supervisory staff appear to have full plates. I have had an experience previously with being told incomplete

information. I made the changes at some expense, came back for approval and expensive additional requirements were issued. This was enormously frustrating. Had I been informed about all the requirements up front, I would have been in a better position to decide on the merits of continuing with the project.

Policies that are not outlined in the codes, and code issues that you inconsistently see enforced have made some recent experiences frustrating. I am a firm advocate of using common sense when interpreting a questionable code issue. I rarely witness the same common sense approach from the city employee.

Staff is programmed to follow specific rules and regulations, without regard to common sense. For instance we were enclosing a 5 X 7 foot porch and one of the departments that had to sign off was the department that handles air traffic/flight patterns. They could not explain the logic. On an earlier demolition of a simple 6 X 8 aluminium storage shed I was expected to have a variety of departments including the traffic control division, the health department, historical society, water department, other utilities. The storage shed was a stand alone shed that had fallen apart, I had pictures, but they still insisted that all the various departments be involved. It took me the better part of a full day to obtain the various signatures, and only one hour to tear down the shed and haul it away. I understand their procedures, but logic did not follow, and no one there was authorized to make a decision. Staff members, would shake their heads in agreement with the nonsense, but shrug and say that it's got to be done because they are regulations.

Staff members continually provide inconsistent answers. Moreover, some staff members are more concerned with personal business, phone calls and the fact that they feel overly "empowered." As a customer we sometimes feel threatened by the staff. In addition, there is a major problem with releasing final inspection information from Development Services(City of San Antonio)to CPS. This problem is an extreme inconvenience for the customer and is very frustrating! Development services needs better front line management, training and consistency.

staff needs the ability to think for themselves and make decisions based on the needs of the project

The entire permits department is without direction. My problem involved a building permit for a house in King William. At some time the lot on which the house sits had been divided. (This was prior to the platting ordinance-- the area has never been platted.) I was refused a permit because the lot, according to the permit department, had been illegally divided. I appealed to the "ombudsman" only to discover that he had been the person who initially denied my request, despite a specific provision in the code that covers exactly such situations. I appealed to the platting department. Personnel there informed me that the exception provision did, indeed, cover my situation, but they have no authority, nor even any influence, over permitting. I was given the choice of paying some \$7,000 - 410,000 to have the lot platted, or go through a lengthy process to request an exception. I chose to request the exception. I was forced to go through a nearly 6 month delay, hire a lawyer, to appeal for an exception from the planning commission. The appeal was ultimately successful, granting me only what I had properly requested in

my original permit application. The entire experience has convinced me that the entire One-stop operation lacks effective leadership and management. I intend to discuss this issue, pressing for a solution, with the new city manager, once she has settled into office.

The intake person was courteous. She had asked me for a suite number, which I gave as U219. She went to her supervisor, to ask what to do, since Alpha characters were not allowed as room numbers. Our building has had major renovations and this has never come up. The supervisor yelled and threw up his hands, saying, "You figure it out, you have done it before". He then walked off, with no direction of what to do. His name is Abel Torrez. The intake person, then tried to call his supervisor, Debbie Allen, who was off. It took 1 hour and 45 minutes for a simple remodeling of 2300 sq ft. On two other projects, that met the walk through criteria, we were denied. Staff have a poor service attitude, are unfriendly and should be replaced. Some have been helpful, but I find the general attitude very poor. It is hard to complain, you will never get your permit. **[name, company, phone number removed]**

The main problem is I could not get a straight forward answer to solve my problem and it delayed our project several weeks.

The plan review staff generally makes no distinction between design related requirements and construction/inspection requirements related to codes. Design Professionals have limited control of the means and methods of installations yet the permit process often involves costly holds on projects related to installation or construction in the direct control of contractors, but not in the direct control of design professionals. The staff needs to be educated on the difference between contract documents (plans and specifications) and the construction practice itself and limit the amount of on-hold comments that are related to construction practice.

The process has improved greatly since the move to the one stop center. However a few things could be improved: A. Development services staff relationships with other city departments, i.e. NCR for example. The lack of productive results from NCR may be more of a problem within that department, but expediting/reducing bureaucracy in projects by the city, for the city should be much more simple and timely. A word about HDRC: They have been diligent and very interested in each of the four projects I have brought before them and I have no strong suggestions for them, perhaps they should be singled out for excellence and given some additional teeth. B. Development Services staff should have absolute knowledge of the building codes (ALL Chapters) and their application relative to this city's rules/regulations. Ambiguity with respect to the building code results in delays and costs to the Owner and project team (and at times the City is the Owner) as well as un-needed angst for diligent private citizens. It should go without saying that everyone in the department should have the SAME unequivocal understanding of each issue. It should be pointed out that my experience with the department over the last dozen years (something over a dozen projects) has been generally agreeable. If the improvements continue on the same pace as the last few years, it could be a stellar example to other cities. We're not there yet, but it's possible.

The process is too difficult and time consuming, staff is unwilling or unable to make exceptions even if they are justified.

The process of submitting plans, was totally lacking a connecting with direction of what is required from one source. In a prelem meeting one thing would be stated and then under plane review people who were previously met with, beat us up with a code book that did not provide common sense solutions. If several engineers, at the expenss of the owner, design and seal plans deeming the project safe why cant the city allow the owneres licensed engineer to resolve issue questionable by the city. Our experiance had both our fire engineers say the city is just reading word out of a book that dose not make sense for our builing type. We spent an extra \$122,000 on fire walls that the city inforced when two fire engineers researched the fire issues. Their conclusion showed the city plan reviewers were stuck to a method that isolated their opinions and practices even if they are professional engineers and gave us, the owner, a sensless process and unnecessary expenses. Please do some thing if I may help contact me: dmis007@msn.com

The questions of this survey have been focused on how visits to One Stop were handled. I've never had an unpleasant experience in face to face meetings. However, it is what goes on after these preliminary plan reviews and the attempt to get interpretations nailed down prior to architects completing the drawings. None of the plan reviewers with the exception of Paul Oakley will stand behind their original plan review comments and their rulings change during permit plan review, thus costing us as architects and owners thousands of dollars in lost time and revenue. Why even bother with preliminary plan reviews?

The system needs better organization. The plan reviewers need to stick to the code in and note place personal judgement on problems or ideas. It seems that the city is very narrow minded when it come to development of new ideas.

There are always different people at the counters each time you come in. Many of them don't know the answers to things and have to check with someone else. City projects especially parks where there are no actual buildings should move more quickly than a large commercial development but they never do.

There is still a lack of communication between the departments on proceedure. Although this is not intentional, it is the result of the "Top Brass" not establishing their authority. Heaven forbid if you have a question out of the norm. No one will take responsibility and the feudal lords still remain terretorial Example: The simple task of requesting addresses for existing in-fill lots took six weeks for our client "Our Casas Resident Council, Inc. until we were forced to hire "two expediters" to walk the halls. This delayed the placing of curbs and driveway aprons without which we could not receive a 'Certificate of Occupancy' in time to prevent the loss of our exasperated buyers. We stand-by to address these concerns and others in the event your office holds a conference on the matter.
[name and organization removed]

there seems to be a break down in where people are directed, example for problems that requires a particular person to handle. The staff was unsure who I need to speak to. I was going in circles for a while.

They need more training

This particular project is for an office finish-out. It is generally a issue free process. However, several other projects I am involved with have several issues that the reviewers requirements conflict with the requirements of the UDC.

Too much reliance on "code", or the UBC codes. Of 5 different building inspectors that have been to my jobsite, no had the authority to make a decision regarding my fence, and all quoted code. Now I am to go in front of the variance committee/board Nov. 7th.

Train the customer service personnel so that they are more knowledgeable concerning inspection requirements related to certain types of permits.

Upon on my first attempt to turn in my permit application at one of the stations I needed help with the tree ordinance form which I did not understand. The first gentleman who worked at the booth (I don't remember his name) was unwilling to help me and was ready to let me leave without applying for the building permit. He only told me I did not have the right form filled out and he did not know which one I was supposed to fill out. I stopped at the information booth and ask "Do you not have anyone working here who understands this form ?" She called and go a lady to come down and assist me with the tree ordinance form which is very confusing to the general public. A lady came down and very kindly and professional helped me fill out the proper permit and I took another number and waited my turn to be called again. The second time I got a lady who worked at Booth #5 and her name was Ms. Martinez. She was an absolute angel and explained everything well to help me through the process. She even took time to explain the process after the permit is received to make things go smoothly. We are building the house now. This lady is a total opposite of the first employee I encountered and she deserves some sort of recognition as an outstanding employee. **[name, company, and number removed]**

way too much beauracy. Rules change almost dailey, can't count on any two people to give you the same answer.

We were asked for a landscaping plan to add a building addition to the back of a concrete products plant. This seems wasteful - it is located away from any public streets and in the back of the building. There are no streets within a mile of the building addition and since it is a concrete plant, we do not have any landscaping in the production areas - only at the plant office...

When a project is unique and special circumstances should be allowed it is very difficult to obtain approvals so that projects can be submitted and approved. Someone needs to be in charge of your one stop center and willing to accept leadership and responsibility.

you need to hire front desk personal with experience in the feild for processing sumitted doc.And have reveiw staff call back in a timly matter

I had to pay an extra \$421 for a tree violation because of some site work done by the developer before I bought the property I was building on. The city Arborist said it didn't matter if the developer did the damage or if CPS did the damage when they were putting in the underground utilities, I had to pay for it because I was taking out the permit.

The process for a ten day turnaround is timely and complete. I submit 6-8 telecommunication permits a year. I've always had great service and ussally close to the expected time frame. It might speed up the process if the check-in person could weive the n/a items which often automaticly appear as required. For example: Why should the permit require a tree ordinance review when the antennas are on top of an existing roof or on an existing tower. This is always taken care of but it does take time because some of these are required reviews. Better trained plan check-in people with the authority to override manitory steps when they are not applicable might streamline the process.

Miscellaneous Comments and Recommendations for Policy Changes

get more forms on line (internet) to expedite the process

Have no comments.

Historic review and design board was a little too overboard in their request and after going to the committee meeting, I think the committee tries to exert too much power and control over the projects brought before them. My experience with the construction permit process has been generally bad. The people one deals with seem to be on some kind of power-trip and act like they could give a shit less whether they help you or not.

Historical permits and the like should be handled at all locations not only at the one stop

Hopefully we can meet for some additional information and can work together for a common goal to help our customers.

I am a real estate developer that works with the the One Stop group on a very regular basis; we usually have someone from our office down there twice a week. I would like to schedule a meeting with the Mayor to discuss some ideas for improving the process. Please let me know if there is a time that I could meet with him. Thanks – **[name, company, number removed]**

I am not satisfied with the price of the yard sale permit, I don't believe there should be a charge to have a yard sale on my own private property.

I called and asked for information, I haven't got a permit yet. I will get one in November when I do my repairs.

I contacted development services to question a resident who was building in a historic district without a permit. The HDRC Staff is very helpful and informative but they can not issue a stop work order. It appears there is no enforcement to protect our historical districts. There needs to be a building inspector specifically for Historic Structures and homes within a historic District. Also, Code Compliance will not enforce the law regarding building without a permit in the historical districts. Developmental Services needs to be more proactive in preservation.

I do not agree with the ETJ regulations outside the City limits. Our property is right on the Bexar / Wilson county line. It states that the property must be within 5-8 miles (I don't remember off the top of my head, but we are further outside the City limits than 5-8 miles. This is farm land and I feel the City is taking advantage of the people outside the City limits.

I hope they leave the McCreless location open.

I requested and received a renewal for a single family new house. Previous plans were approved in 2003 and June 2055, however, foundation required supports were over looked on both occasions causing me extra work and materials at this point. This was an oversight of the plan reviews or they assumed the plans were adequate. Nonetheless, I am installing the required supports. Thank you for contacting me and your survey. Sincerely, **[name and address removed]**

I suggest you attend one of the San Antonio Electrical Board meetings and see for yourself how heavily weighed in one direction it is.

I wish that all services could be done at the satellite locations like registering license renewals and Insurance certificates, not having to go down to the main office for some one to push one button on the computer down on South Alamo. Why can't the personnel at the other offices touch that button and they are as smart as the people down town and we do not have to wait in line as long and find parking at these locations? The malls have ample parking.

I would like to see more of these services offered on the Northwest side of the city. west I 10 and north of Huebner. Everything seems to be downtown or on the eastside.

I WOULD LIKE TO WORK THERE. I would like to know how to replate, a property. I would like to conduct business there online for permits using mastercard.

If the City would have taken the time to explain "Grandfather Clause" they would have saved us both a lot of time. **[name removed]**

In-person visits at "one-stop" are far more productive than phone requests.

it is typical of most experiences with the department.

It takes too long to get a permit. The review process is too slow.

It was through the telephone and I was calling on behalf of my elderly parents. I work in a professional business and I felt the Council 7 office was very unprofessional. The Admin. said she would have someone get back to me and they never did. After receiving a notice to go to court because we did not comply, which we felt we had complied because no one had told us otherwise. I am very disappointed in the rudeness and feel that this could have been handled better. I feel it is a shame that the elderly can be treated this way by Council 7.

It would be nice to get on the internet and do permits for signs, like every other trade gets to do.

Mr. Mayor I do not know if you will see this response, but I have an issue concerning chapter 10 of the electrical section. If you are concerned for knowing please feel free to contact me at **[number, email and name removed]**

My experience is unique, in that we are a sign company in san antonio. Signs are our business. Your sign inspectors cost me my largest account, Wendy's of San Antonio. I was denied a permit for a sign at Blanco and 1604. Because the sign was not on Wendy's property. This I understand, and explained it to Wendy's. But your sign inspectors allowed another sign company just weeks later to instll this illegal sign. And it is still up. Even after bringing it to the inspector's attention. Ms. Garza Thanks to your inspector's mistake, these actions, among others, have cost me hunderds of thousands of dollars in revenue. This is a very poorly run department. I have in the past, called to let this department aware of some very unsafe situations, and was treated as a nuisances. safty should be the first priority. And lastly. Why on any given day can i drive and see thousands of "weekend" sign, (kb homes, david weekly, and other developers signs) These should be monitored closer. Hunt rd, Potranco, rittiman, walzem. Enough for now. I'm just venting. Please, feel free to phone for a better explanation. Sign Network of San Antonio [name and number removed]

my thought is that the plumbing code should be updated to allow for the installation of demand water heaters. the present code does not allow for common sense applications. final decisions as to there installation should be with the end user and his/her application. Thanks

no comment.

None

One stop employees are nice folks to work with. My problem is the on line system is terrible. too many screens required to get the inpection status required. There is no on page document giving a broad brush status. More could be done with a simple spread sheet. Very poorly designed in my opinion.

Our experience with Economic Development, specifically Ramiro Cavasos has been beyond impressive. We have been given quick and percise answers to all of our questions and concerns. This in stark contrast to other departments we have dealt with in the past. I'd like to hold my comments on these group for another time and place.

San Antonio is a great place. However industry has always been composed of military installations, etc. Our city code was written aimed at residential issues and to provide for safe construction of residential buildings. We need to rewrite the code to address industrial construction and the speed at which permits are issued. Lack of qualified inspectors who have no clue as to industrial construction sometimes creates a situation where simple matters snowball into red tape. This is frustrating to tennants and contractors. Help!!!!!!!We can improve this tremendously as well as save tiem and labor. Thanks for the opportunity to vent!

San antonio's future as a vibrant, prosperous and beautiful city will continue to hinge upon the relationships with developers that take responsibility for shaping the physical growth line. The outer edges of San Antonio are moving so rapidly that I am convinced permitting has more to do with timelines and short-term revenues for the City than

properly reviewed plans that may or may not be what San Antonio wants to be. Progress is in our best interest and supporting growth is good for our economy locally. Allowing poorly developed projects a green light is actually stepping backward. Let's look at Houston as a loop-developed city and consider the mess.

Staff is being directed Emil Moncivais & Mayor Garza. They do not care what is right (or wrong for that matter), as long as you do it like they want today so they can take the credit. Tomorrow they might want it a different way.

Staff was very firm on us getting adequate licenses and permits and we don't understand why when we report buildings or developments being made nothing is done about it. Example in 2401 commerce they keep building and adding to it on weekends and they have no permits. Supposedly they have been fined, but they still keep building. Their business is not registered and we don't think they pay taxes. Why do some of us have to get licenses and permits and pay city taxes and others get away with it. We don't think it is fair.

Thank you for including me in this survey, it is nice seeing our city address the needs and concerns of its residents, businesses, and city services.

the city development has a very poor attitude in helping out the voter's of this city

The cost of doing business.

The original intent of Development Services is for Code Enforcement to ensure the health and public safety issues of new commercial development and to assure the health, safety and welfare for buyers of new home construction. News articles and public complaints filed indicate that this department and its services may have been less than adequate from the consumer's point of view. This survey does not address concerns for the intent of a law enforcement agency but gives indications that it may have become a city 'service oriented' department at the behest of the industry. The questions in the survey seem to confirm that the intent is to improve 'service oriented' programs for the building industry. **With that in mind, I might suggest equal consideration of customer scarification by conducting a survey to determine the level of services of building 'code enforcement' from the buyers of new homes point of view. Just how satisfied was the customer with the level of inspection services by the city of new homes?**

The staff and manager were helpful. I enjoy this location and the Vista. The downtown location is trouble some to get in and out of with work trucks and then we have to worry if any vagrants are breaking into the trucks.

there are too many regulations that it takes forever to find out what exactly you have to do on each project a step by step procedure list for most used projects would help a lot especially for people that do different projects throughout the year

They lost our plans for permit and spent 45 minutes looking for them while we waited.

Too much government interference in private lives

When the Tree Ordinance place the same value on a Cedar, Hackberry or other trash tree as on Oak or other hard wood tree it just wrong...

Wouldn't want to say. It's hard enough to get a premit without putting a target on us for one stop to shoot at.

Yard sale permits are too restrictive.

Yes, it would be very helpful to those citizens of San Antonio (especially senior citizens), and possibly prevent them from becoming victims of fraudulent contractors, if at the time they seek permits for projects being done by someone they are not familiar with, that they be presented with a list of names of contractors on the BBB website.

You need to have someone working on permits versus (birth certificates, police reports, etc...)